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THE DOCTRINE OF SOVEREIGN GRACE

Opened and Vindicated.

THE DOCTRINE OF SOVEREIGN GRACE

Opened and Vindicated:

AND ALSO

The *Conſiſtency* and *Duty* of declaring DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY, and Mens IMPOTENCY, while yet we addreſs their *Conſciences* with the Warnings of *Truth*, and Calls of the *Goſpel*.

By *ISAAC BACKUS*,

Paſtor of a Church in *Middleborough*.

I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt; for it is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth.

Rom. i. 16.

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THE DOCTRINE OF SOVEREIGN GRACE

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PART I.

THE chief occaſion of the enſuing diſcourſe is this: About four years ago, on a view of the prevailing diſpoſition in multitudes, either to pry into futurities, to the neglect of preſent duty, or to contend about religion, inſtead of regarding the life and practice of it, while the vanities of time carried the world before them, I was moved to publiſh a diſcourſe from *James* ii. 22. with this title, *True Faith will produce good Works.* And through the whole endeavoured to handle the glorious truths of the goſpel in a practical way; and had as little expectation of being publicly attacked therefor as for any thing I ever wrote: And I was not alone in this thought, for a worthy miniſter in *Great-Britain* ſays, in a letter, "Your ſermon on the "Fruits of Faith is well adapted to ſilence gain-"ſayers." Yet how often are we diſappointed in this evil world!

Mr.

Mr. *Daniel Martin*, Elder of a Baptiſt Church in *Rehoboth*, publiſhed a piece laſt fall, intituled, *Some Meditations on the plain Teſtimony of the holy Scriptures, relating to the* elect *or* choſen of God, &c. wherein, after inſerting as a motto our Saviour's caution to take heed how and what we hear, he begins thus: "Having received the "foregoing caution and inſtruction from the moſt "wonderful Counſellor that ever ſpoke on earth, "I have made the following obſervations on ſe-"veral points of doctrine delivered by Mr. *Iſaac* "*B——s*, in his book intituled, *True Faith will* "*produce good Works*, wherein he hath made ma-"ny worthy obſervations, and given divers good "inſtructions; but to my ſorrow he hath advanc-"ed ſeveral points of doctrine, which appear to "me to be in oppoſition to the ſenſe and pure "meaning of the holy ſcriptures." And he goes on to bend all his force through his whole performance againſt the peculiar doctrines of ſovereign grace.

Several reaſons were ſuggeſted, in my own mind and by others, againſt making any reply to this piece at all: As that it is ſo plainly erroneous, that it was not likely to do much hurt; that there is no end of controverſy; and it is peculiarly diſagreeable for one Baptiſt to contend with another, who have ſo many others againſt them on every ſide. But in anſwer to this, it appears, that as plain as theſe errors are, yet many are carried away with them; and though contention is diſagreeable, yet if we can ſee the faith once delivered to the ſaints betrayed, and hold our peace, how ſhall we anſwer it to him who has required us to contend

earneſtly

earneſtly therefor? And will not a juſt view of the laſt objection turn its weight the other way? For an engine which has been much uſed, both in the paſt and preſent age, to prejudice people againſt the Baptiſts, has been to repreſent them as unſound in goſpel doctrine; and now when an aged Elder of that denomination has repreſented to the world, that to hold, "That faith is not of man," carries in it that "He that is juſtified by faith, is juſtified "becauſe God hath given it to him; and he that "believeth not is damned, becauſe God hath not "given him faith;" p. 15. if we let ſuch reproaches againſt ſovereign grace paſs unanſwered, becauſe in our denomination, what a handle would others make of it, to repreſent us all either as corrupt in principle, or elſe more after party than truth? Nay, if thoſe who met their *enemies* ox or aſs going aſtray, and did not bring it back again, broke a command of God*; how can we anſwer it to him, if we ſee our *friends* and fellow mortals going in a way that we are fully convinced leads to deſtruction, and not attempt, as we have opportunity, to ſhew them their danger? *Paul's* earneſt deſire for the ſalvation of his brethren and kinsfolk, moved him to take pains to convince them, that, though they followed after the law of righteouſneſs, yet that they did quite miſs their way, becauſe they ſought it *not by faith, but as it were by the deeds of the law. Rom.* ix. 22. And as it appears to me that Mr. *M*——*n* has miſſed the right way in the ſame reſpect, I think it a duty to attempt in a brief and plain manner to ſhew him wherein he has done ſo.

The

* *Exod.* xxiii. 4.

The grand point which he objects againſt in my book, is the manner of my holding *election*: He profeſſeth to hold it; but thinks I hold it in a wrong way. I had obſerved from *Eph.* i. 3—7. that *Paul* ſays, *He hath choſen us, that we ſhould be holy*; but the modern notions are, that he chooſeth us becauſe we *are holy*, making that to be the *cauſe*; which *Paul* viewed to be the *effect*: All the controverſy turns upon this point, whether the good pleaſure of God's will, or our free will, be the cauſe of our holineſs and happineſs. Mr. *M——n* mentions this, and anſwers, that *both* are the cauſe thereof, p. 6. To prove which, he cites many declarations of God's good will, and then ſays, "Since it is "the good will of God that all men ſhould be "ſaved and come to the knowledge of the truth, "what doth hinder, or indeed what can hinder or "prevent, but the want of man's good will?" p. 7. Ay ſure enough, what elſe can hinder? But ſince that is *wanting*, how can it be any cauſe of our ſalvation? *Solomon* ſays, That which is *wanting* cannot be numbered: Yet behold! here is one wiſer than *Solomon*! For he can reckon that which is *wanting* for a principal part of the capital ſum! Perhaps it will be ſaid, if it is wanting in one, it may not in another. This I ſuppoſe is the thing aimed at, for he ſays, "By free will I un-"derſtand good will; when a man's will is to do "the will of God." p. 7. And again, "We may "aſſure ourſelves, that God hath not hid the "light of the goſpel from any man or people, "who deſire and ſeek after the knowledge of "God." p. 13. Who pretends that he does? I was ſo far from doing of it, that in anſwer to an objection,

objection, p. 82. I obſerved, that "We may be heartily willing to do many outward actions, which yet we cannot do, and ſo are excuſed from blame in our not doing them; but the cauſe why ſouls cannot believe the record which God has given of his Son, and love and obey him with all their hearts, is becauſe they *love darkneſs rather than light*; yea, *hate the light*, becauſe the *carnal mind is enmity againſt God*." *John* iii. 19, 20. *Rom.* viii. 7. And if our advocate for free will and good works read this and much more to the ſame purpoſe in my book, before he wrote againſt it, where are his good works, while he miſrepreſents my ſentiments? And if he did not read it, where is his regard to equity, to condemn a man without a hearing?

Mr. *M——n* has told us, that by free will he underſtands a will to do the will of God; but he has not informed us who the people are, or where they live, that naturally have ſuch a will: He is not ſo fair in this reſpect, as *Robert Barclay* was about *perfection*; for though he laboured much to prove that ſuch a ſtate was attainable in this life, yet he ſays, "With reſpect to myſelf, I ſpeak mo-"deſtly, becauſe I ingeniouſly confeſs that I have "not yet attained it *." So here I believe every one

* By the way I would here obſerve, that as in my late *Plea for Liberty of Conſcience*, I happened to mention it as a Quaker notion, that when a perſon has the ſpirit with him, he is then perfect; I would now retract that ſentence; for I am informed by a principal leader among them, that I miſtook their ſentiments; and I would always watch againſt miſrepreſenting any people, though I differ ever ſo much from them. He informs me that they hold ſanctification to be a progreſſive work, and that a perſon may be under powerful influences of the ſpirit, and yet have remaining corruptions, though they ſuppoſe that a per-

one of *Adam*'s children, who are brought to a true ſight of their caſe, will concur with the Apoſtle's confeſſion, that *all* have ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God; and that *all* go on, either ſecretly or openly, to ſerve divers luſts and pleaſures, till the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour appears, *not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy*, to ſave us, by the *waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, *Rom.* iii. 23. *Tit.* iii. 3—5. Our author's notion that both God's will and ours are the cauſe of our ſalvation, runs him into the following abſurdities.

I. To exclude all thoſe divine teſtimonies which prove man's univerſal depravity: That both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are *all* under ſin, and *none* righteous, no *not one*; are *all* gone out of the way, and *none* that doth good, no *not one*; that we are *by nature* children of wrath, *even as others*; that the ſcripture hath included *all* under ſin, *Rom.* iii. 9—19. *Eph.* ii. 3. *Gal.* iii. 22. I ſay his notion excludes all ſuch teſtimonies of truth, of which the bible is full, even ſo far, that though his book is filled with texts which he imagines will prove univerſal redemption, yet I think he never takes notice of one

a perfect victory over them is attainable in this life. Now as I willingly retract my miſtake of their ſentiments, ſo I think it but a friendly part to let them know, that for friend *Barclay*, in p. 8. of his Apology, to repreſent that "Thoſe who plead "for juſtification wholly by the imputation of a righteouſneſs "without them, deny the neceſſity of being cloathed with an "inward righteouſneſs," is not juſt; for no men upon earth hold ſtronger to the neceſſity of regeneration and inward ſanctification, than thoſe who truſt alone on Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs for their juſtification before God.

one that proves our univerſal depravity, notwithſtanding he talks ſo much of keeping cloſe to ſcripture.

II. As the nature of his ſcheme is the ſame of that which inſnared the *Galatians*, ſo it is attended with the ſame conſequence which the Apoſtle mentions to them: It would *fruſtrate* the grace of God, and make Chriſt to *die in vain*, *Gal.* ii. 21. For if men have a will to do the will of God, they had no need of a Saviour to die for them, and if they have it not, they are like to periſh, notwithſtanding what he has done; for Mr. *M——n* ſays, "It ſeems by our Lord's parable, *Luke* xiv. "16—20. that there was nothing wanting on the "part of him that made the ſupper, but on the "part of them that were bidden; their good will "was lacking; their will and affections were on "earthly things." p. 7. Therefore by his ſcheme, unleſs our Lord could find ſome of the children of men who had not their will and affections on earthly things, his great ſupper will be loſt: Nay it muſt unavoidably be ſo; for if any could be found with ſuch a good will as our author deſcribes, the Saviour could have no right to call them to this ſupper, becauſe he came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance, *Luke* v. 32. That turn which way you will, this notion of free will *fruſtrates* the grace of God, and would make Chriſt to *die in vain*. Mr. *M——n* ſays, "They did not "improve the power he had given them." I know they did not improve it right, for they improved it to excuſe themſelves from coming, and to purſue their own ways. Again he aſſerts, that "Faith "is a work which God requireth of man, and

" what our Lord taught the people to labour in." p. 14. And to prove it refers us to *John* vi. 27—29. Though in this he discovers a darker notion about faith than the *Jews* did, for it appears that they knew that faith is giving credit to another, and not a work of our own; therefore in the next words they ask for a sign, that they might see and believe, and they plainly intimate, that though he had fed five thousand, yet *Moses* had done much more, even fed six hundred thousand of their fathers in the wilderness, so that they were not inclined to leave *Moses* for *Jesus*; and though he assured them that it was not *Moses* who gave that bread, and that the Father had now given the true bread from heaven, yet their disposition and conduct discovered plainly, that it must be the *work of God* to make any of them believe it. Mr. *M——n* is so far from allowing this point, that he ventures to declare, that " The unbeliever is not made a be-" liever by the mighty power of God working " in him, but by hearing and receiving the " word." p. 30. And so because the word is the instrument of faith, he denies that God by his power is the *author* of it; and holds it to be " of man." p. 14. Hence,

III. His plan would make the will of the Creator *dependent* on the will of the creature; for he labours much to prove that full provision is made for the salvation of all men, while he owns that many miss of it, because their good will is wanting, yet denies the exertion of divine power to work faith in any; the certain consequence of which is, that it *depends* upon man's will whether God shall ever have his good will in the salvation of one soul

or

or not! This conſequence is ſo unanſwerable, that it ſeems our author dare not meddle with it; for I had mentioned it in a quotation from one of our Baptiſt Elders in *Carolina*, at the foot of my 56th page; yet though he quotes a paſſage out of the middle of that page, he never ſays a word upon this glaring abſurdity which attends his doctrine. For the reader's ſatisfaction, I will give him the paſſage. It is this: "*Conditional election* ſets up an "*inferior* cauſe above a *ſuperior*; making election "and ſalvation no more than a *may be*, inſtead of "a *ſhall be*. It repreſents the Almighty as ever "fluctuating in his councils, taking up with new "conſultations *dependent* on the fickle will of man, "and the uncertain acts that flow therefrom; by "which method he is brought in ſaying, O! I "will if they will, and O! that they may will to "believe, become holy, diligently and perſever-"ingly improving their ſtock of free will abilities, "that they may be ſaved; nevertheleſs NOT MY "WILL, but THEIR WILL be done *!" Now ſince this lay directly in Mr. *M*——*n*'s way, what reaſon can be given for his avoiding any mention of it, but becauſe he could not anſwer it? I confeſs it is beyond my weak capacity to conceive how it can be fairly anſwered, and if others can, it would certainly be much more to the purpoſe to do it, than what they on that ſide generally dwell upon. The ſum of all our author's meditations is, he imagines that to hold the good pleaſure of God's will to be the ſole cauſe of our ſalvation, and that faith is his gift, and wrought in the ſoul by

* Mr. *Iſaac Chanler*'s Doctrines of Grace, printed at *Boſton*, 1744, p. 208.

by his power, would carry this dreadful conſequence in it, 'That men cannot be judged and 'rewarded according to their works, but according as he hath given, or neglected to give.' And he ſeems as much affrighted at this imagination as over a timorous perſon was at a black ſtump in the night: He has it over and over from one end of his pamphlet to the other, and upon every mention of it, he turns away to a number of ſcriptures, which prove that God is both juſt and merciful, which we hold as fully as he does; alſo upon every view of my pleas for God's ſovereignty and power, that frightful image riſes in view again, which makes ſuch powerful impreſſions upon him, that he ſeems not to know ſcripture when he runs againſt it. For inſtance, I had obſerved, p. 33. that ſaving faith is a receiving with all the heart the witneſs and teſtimony that God has given of eternal life in his Son, and he who believeth not hath made him a liar. 1ſt *John*, v. 9—12, the evidence of which truth ſhines ſo clear as to leave all without excuſe, who do not believe with all their hearts; while every ſoul that is made willing by divine power to receive his teſtimony, and ſet to his ſeal that God is true, knows that this *faith is not of himſelf*, it is the *gift of God*. I thus marked theſe laſt words as ſcripture, and in the margin referred to the text, *Eph.* ii. 8. yet Mr. *M——n*, after citing this paſſage, ſays, "Is it "right to ſay, becauſe faith is the gift of God, "that therefore it is not of man?" And after bringing many texts to try to prove that this is not true, he ſays, "Now let us conſider a little of the "conſequence of this *vain notion*, that faith is *not*

"*of*

"*of man.*" p. 14, 15. And ſo recurs to his frightful imagination again, without being ſenſible that he is not here contending with *I. B.* but with divine revelation. And I muſt confeſs that thoſe who hold to his doctrine of free will, would be more conſiſtent to own themſelves *Deiſts*, than to act as they now do; for Dr. *Young*, the moſt open Deiſt that I have heard of in this country, publiſhed a piece in his own defence, in the *Boſton Evening-Poſt*, the 27th of laſt *Auguſt*, wherein he declares, he has as great a veneration for many glorious things in the old and new-teſtament as any Chriſtian in this country; but ſays, there are ſome things in the ſcriptures that he does not underſtand. And what are they? Why ſays he, "Such as how God can be ſaid to predeſtinate one "to everlaſting life, and leave another to inevi- "table and eternal perdition, and yet *of a truth*, "be no reſpecter of perſons." This he thinks to be inconſiſtent, and therefore rejects thoſe parts of ſcripture that teach it: Mr. *M——n* profeſſes to hold all the ſcripture, and yet the center of all his difficulty with me, is exactly the ſame that the Deiſt has againſt the bible, becauſe it teaches that doctrine. And the bottom of the matter with both is, becauſe they think they *deſerve* ſomething better than to be left to periſh in their ſins: For if that were not the caſe, any perſon of common ſenſe can eaſily ſee the right the *houſholder* had to *give* to ſome what they did not deſerve, while he did not fail to let every one have their due; and can ſee the iniquity of thoſe who *murmured* at the *good man* for ſo doing. Yea vulgar underſtandings can eaſily comprehend the juſtice of that ſtriking

demand,

demand, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?* Our Lord tells us that the kingdom of heaven is *like* this. *Matt.* xx. 1—15. Therefore,

IV. This scheme would rob God of his essential *glory*. I had observed, that the respect of persons which is condemned in scripture, is a *perverting of justice*, and every pious soul detests such a thought concerning the Deity; yet we have early notice of his respecting persons in another sense, for he had *respect* to *Abel* and to his offering; but unto *Cain* and to his offering he had not *respect*; which made *Cain very wroth*. And I observed that God's demand on him upon that occasion was as much as if he had said, 'Do you think I am so 'unjust, as not to accept all that is well done?' Mr. *M——n* takes notice, that I acknowledge that well-doing is accepted, and yet, as if I had disowned it, he goes on and brings many texts which prove that saints will be rewarded in the great day, and then says, "I think it is plain, "that for any to hold that God, without any just "cause arising from what he foresaw in one man "more than another, hath chosen or elected a "particular number to salvation, and left all the "rest to perish in their sins, is unjust and unequal." p. 5, 6. This is the man who has often cautioned his readers against the *slight* of men, and *craft* of deceivers; but what shall we call his conduct here? He heaps up texts, that the reader may think he has proved his point well, and of course that his antagonist is very erroneous; but what has he proved? Why he has proved that saints will be rewarded, and who denied it? He knows I did not,

not, yet he will have it that there was ſomething foreſeen in them better than others, which was the cauſe of their being choſen and ſaved: It is in plain terms as much as to ſay, 'It is unjuſt and unequal 'for God to *give* ſalvation to ſome ſinners, and leave 'the reſt to periſh, unleſs he ſaw that ſome *deſerved* 'ſalvation more than others;' which would make election and ſalvation to be of *debt*, and not of *grace*, contrary to the whole bible.

For this writer to hold, that becauſe God will reward the *righteous*, that therefore it would be unequal for him to chooſe ſome *ſinners* to life, without ſeeing any good in them more than others, while he left the reſt to periſh, is as unreaſonable as it would be to argue, that a Nobleman could not juſtly beſtow a *free favour* upon any undeſerving object, becauſe he muſt *pay* his workmen their due; or to ſay, becauſe the King muſt execute *juſtice*, that therefore he has no right to ſhew *mercy!* And to repreſent, that holding ſaving faith to be not of ourſelves, but the gift of God, implies, that he muſt "Judge and condemn ſome poor ſinful men "to eternal deſtruction for his own neglect," p. 15. is as falſe as to ſay, becauſe the King pardons ſome criminals, therefore the reſt are executed for his neglect! when in truth the latter are executed for their crimes, while the others are ſaved by the King's mercy; a juſt view whereof will move them to love and obey him all their days; to illuſtrate which was the main deſign of my book, yet our advocate for juſtice and equity has picked out a few ſentences, without regarding the connexion of the diſcourſe, and exerted all his wit to cloath my doctrine with the blaſphemous garb mentioned above!

above! If such treatment of our Creator and fellow-creatures, is the natural effect of this notion of free will instead of free grace, what cause have we to abhor, and bear testimony against it!

I had remarked, that Jesus was so far from giving foreseen faith and good works as the cause of babes receiving gospel grace, instead of the wise and prudent, that he resolves it into the Father's pleasure alone, *for so it seemed good in thy sight*, *Matt.* xi. 26. Mr. *M——n* cites this passage, p. 9. and then fills up four pages with scriptures and reasonings, to prove that grace is proclaimed to all, and that those who perish will be justly condemned, and reckons it strange that I or any man should think, "That God did not foresee that "when this grace appeared to all men, some "would believe and obey; or if it be concluded "that he did, that he should have no regard "thereunto in his choice." But what a slight of man is here? I asserted the two first of these points as plainly as he has, and hold them as fully, yet by this method he insinuates the contrary. I also hold as strongly as he can, that God foresaw that a number would believe and obey; but the grand point between us is, how they come to do it? He says, mens living in sin and not turning to the Lord, is the cause of their destruction, and if men turn they shall live, p. 11. I say the same with all my heart; but still the question between us is not answered, which is, how they came to turn? How unfair is it in disputing for the opponent to deny a proposition, and then run round and prove several other things, which the respondent holds as much as he does, and then boast of gaining the argument,

ment, without ever touching the point in debate? I had proved that Jesus resolved the cause of babes receiving the gospel, into the Father's pleasure alone: My opponent denies it, and then brings many proofs that the wicked's destruction will be just, and that those who turn shall live, without the least evidence that any of *Adam*'s race have any free will power to turn themselves, or that God had any regard to such a power in choosing one rather than another, which is the very matter in dispute. I dare say, if Mr. *M*——*n* should assert, that none but believers are the proper subjects of baptism under the gospel, and one should deny it, and then produce many proofs that children were circumcised under the law, which he knows as well as they, he would hardly allow that he was fairly confuted; yet that would be full as fair as his treatment of me here.

And what shall we say, if to unfairness men border hard upon untruths? He says, "To prove "this scheme, Mr. *B*——*s* hath brought out of the "whole bible *one* text, which is *Matt.* xi. 26." p. 12. as if that one text was all I had produced to prove that grace is bestowed in a way of entire sovereignty; when in the very page before, I brought *Luke* iv. 15—29. where it appears that the inhabitants of *Nazareth* attended with admiration to what Jesus preached concerning *grace*, as long as they imagined that they had a better claim thereto than others; but when he let them know from the instance of favour shewn to a widow among the *Sidonians*, and to a leper among the *Syrians*, which was not shown to any in *Israel*, that he had a good right to give salvation to the

heathen, and leave them to perish in their sins;—then those who wondered at his *gracious words* before, were *filled with wrath*, and rose up and THRUST him out. I say I had quoted this scripture in the foregoing p[illegible], with a larger comment upon it than I have given now, to prove the absolute sovereignty of grace; yet Mr. *M——n* skips over it without any notice, and would have the reader believe that I could bring but one text to favour my plan in all the bible.

Sovereignty God claims as his peculiar glory, therefore in answer to the earnest request of *Moses* for a sight of his *glory*, he says, *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy to whom I will shew mercy*, *Exod.* xxxiii. 19. And the Apostle *Paul* cites this passage, and then concludes thus upon it: *So then it is* NOT OF *him that willeth*, NOR OF *him that runneth*, *but* OF GOD *that sheweth mercy*, *Rom.* ix. 16. But our late reasoner says, "Most certainly BOTH the good will of God and "the *free will of man* is the *cause* of their holiness "and happiness," p. 6. I leave it to the reader's consideration, which of them is to be credited, and proceed to observe, that as this scheme would rob God of his glory, so,

V. It would *cheat men of their souls*, by flattering them along in false hopes till they sink in despair. I know my opponent calls it a *dark* and *discouraging* scheme to hold that God hath chosen only a particular number to salvation, and that without any regard to their faith and obedience, p. 12. But let the matter be well examined: We both profess that full provision is made in the gospel for the salvation of sinners, and I believe that God will

will *make his people willing* in the day of *his power*, to ſerve him in the *beauty of holineſs*; that all who are given by the Father to the Son, *ſhall come to him*; and that *no man can come except the Father draw him*, which drawing is by the *teaching* and almighty influence of the Holy Ghoſt, *Pſal.* cx. 3. *John* vi. 37, 44, 45, 63. and xvi. 8. But Mr. *M——n* holds, that though God's good will has made proviſion for us, yet that it muſt be *of our* free will, *of our* good will, if we ever come to partake of it, p. 6, 7. Therefore as long as ſouls conceit they have or can work up ſuch a good will, they go on with ſelf-righteous hopes; but when they find that they have not ſuch a free will power, and cannot work it up, they muſt ſink in deſpair, notwithſtanding the help this ſcheme can afford them. He calls it a *bold aſſertion* for me to ſay, faith is wrought in the ſoul by the exceeding greatneſs of divine power; and ſays, for this I quote but one text, viz. *Eph.* i. 19. p. 27. which is not true, for in the ſame ſentence (p. 31 of my book) I quote another which calls Jeſus the *author* and *finiſher of faith*, *Heb.* xii. 2. And though he imagines that the power ſpoken of in *Eph.* i. 19. is only what is exerted to aſſiſt the believer in doing wonders, and not a "Power which none can "hinder, working faith in them who have not be-"lieved," p. 27. and preſumes to ſay, "The un-"believer is not made a believer by the mighty "power of God working in him," p. 30. Yet alas! what an awful caſe ſhould we be in, if this was all the hope that the goſpel gave! The *letter killeth*, but the *ſpirit giveth life*. The *vail* will remain upon our hearts, till the ſpirit of the Lord takes

takes it away, and gives us with open face to behold the divine glory, by which we are *changed* into the ſame image, 2d *Cor.* iii. 6—18. And ſince Mr. *M*——*n* denies that the power ſpoken of in *Eph.* i. 19. which raiſed Chriſt from the dead, is the power that firſt makes a ſinner a believer, I would deſire him to read on to the next chapter, where truth ſays, *When we were dead in ſins God hath quickened us together with Chriſt*:—*By grace are ye ſaved, through faith; and that* NOT OF *yourſelves: It is the gift of God; not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt, for we are his workmanſhip,* CREATED *in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* And if he will dare to ſay, that *creating* power, and the power that *quickens the dead*, is not the power that "none "can hinder," I ſhall not think it worth while for any man to reaſon farther with him; but hoping that he will not reſiſt the light to ſuch a degree, I would requeſt him to review the abſurdity of his notion, that a greater power is diſplayed to aſſiſt the believer than to convert a ſinner; that is, that a greater power is exerted to help Chriſt's friends, than to conquer his enemies! read *Pſal.* xlv. 1—7. compared with *Heb.* i. 8, 9.

Thus I have ſhewn, that the notion of perſons being elected becauſe of their foreſeen faith and obedience, and that God has made full proviſion for all, yet does not exert his power to bring any to embrace it, but leaves that to the creatures will, excludes all the abundant teſtimony that truth has given to man's univerſal depravity, would fruſtrate the grace of God, and make Chriſt to die in vain; would make the will of the Creator dependent on that of the creature, and rob God of his eſſential glory,

glory, while it would embolden worms to glory in his preſence, that they were better than others, till they ſink in diſcouragement and deſpair, by finding their imaginary excellency and power fail them. But on the other hand, that to hold forth the free proclamation of the goſpel to the *chief of ſinners*, and that Chriſt died for the *ungodly*, and has given the ſpirit to convince and change their ſouls, working in them all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the *work of faith with power*, 2d *Theſ.* i. 11. This opens a glorious door of hope to guilty ſinners, and gives courage to the believer to ſtrive according to his working, who worketh in him mightily, *Col.* i. 29.

Mr. *M——n*, in order to make out that though faith is the gift of God, yet that it is *of man*, ſays, "Our temporal food and raiment are the gift "of God, are they therefore not of men? Hath "not God ordained that man ſhould get bread by "the ſweat of his face? *Gen.* iii. 19—23. And "when he fed his people *Iſrael* with bread from "heaven, and quails in the wilderneſs, they had "it together, and dreſt, and did not eat thereof "without their labour; ſo then faith being the "gift of God, doth not hinder its being the work "and labour of men," p. 14. Upon which I would remark,

1. That here is no diſtinction made betwixt natural and ſpiritual actions, between which there is as great a difference as there is between ſoul and body. We all grant that men have a natural power to do rational actions, but the queſtion is, whether any have ability to perform any ſpiritual or holy action, before they are regenerated by the holy

holy ſpirit or not?—2. It is the divine appointment that our temporal food and raiment ſhould be raiſed out of the earth by our labour; but to hold ſalvation upon ſuch a footing, would make it of *works* and not of *grace*, contrary to the whole goſpel.—3. We allow that the manna that was rained round the *Iſraelites* tents, was a type of the heavenly food which is brought near to our ſouls in the goſpel, and as they were to receive and eat of it freely, ſo the goſpel calls us to a feaſt where *all things are now ready*; but how ridiculous would a meſſenger appear, that ſhould come and call the poor and needy to a *free* entertainment, upon condition they will firſt *work hard for it!* None expect that perſons will enjoy the benefit of food, though ever ſo choice and free, if they do not receive it; but who ever thought that eating food was working for it, or performing a condition to obtain it? However, as coming and eating imply local motion and bodily exerciſe, we are in danger of having our minds ſomewhat darkened by this ſimilitude, if we do not correct it by others; therefore our Lord, in his diſcourſe to *Nicodemus*, compares believing to *Iſrael*'s looking to the brazen ſerpent, which was not a local motion nor long exerciſe; but as quick as ſight; neither had they any thing to recommend them, for they were poiſoned in a deadly manner, and that as the fruit of their ſin; but they were called to look off from themſelves to the remedy which God had freely provided, and as many as did ſo received immediate healing. So do all thoſe who behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the ſin of the world. The very notion of faith carries us off from ourſelves,

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for it is admitting the teſtimony of another, and not any work of ours; our character has no concern in the affair, as whether we are poor or rich, worthy or unworthy, for it depends entirely upon the evidence that we have of the credibility of the ſpeaker: And though we often ſtrive againſt, or try to avoid the light, becauſe our deeds are evil, yet when our ſouls are brought to receive divine truth, it is no more of our work than it is to ſee and enjoy the light when the ſun ſhines, *Pſal.* lxxxiv. 11. *John* iii. 14—20.—4. The light directs our way, and we are influenced by the objects which we view, to avoid what appears odious or dangerous, and to purſue what we think is agreeable with all our might. So by faith the ſoul flies to Chriſt to ſupply all its wants; and cleaves to him in the way of holineſs, and is moved to watch againſt all iniquity, and to crucify the fleſh, with its affections and luſts: This was the whole tenor of my book, which therefore I intituled, *True Faith will produce good Works*; but this title Mr. *M——n* denies, and attempts to prove the contrary; though before he proceeds to any proof, he again brings up his frightful imagination, if poſſible to prepoſſeſs the reader's mind. But hoping that the reader will not be guilty of the folly of judging a matter before he hears it, I would deſire him to take notice what it is that is now to be proved. It is, that "*True faith* doth ſometimes fail of producing good works," p. 25. *True faith*, which I deſcribed to be "A receiving with *all the heart* the "witneſs and teſtimony that God hath given "us." Faith, by which the ſoul views "The "*precept* to be true and excellent, therefore to be

" obeyed; the *promiſe* to be ſure and ſufficient, " therefore he ſhall be ſupported, and preſents " eternal things as *near* and *real*, therefore to be " regarded without delay," p. 33, 35. of my book. This is the conſtant idea that I gave of true faith; yet the firſt text that my opponent brings to prove that it ſometimes fails of producing good works, is *John* xii. 42, 43. which inform us of ſome rulers who believed on Jeſus, but did not confeſs him, becauſe they loved the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God. His ſecond is *John* viii. 30—32. where we find ſome *Jews* who had a ſort of belief on *Jeſus*, but he ſignified to them that a *continuance* in his word would diſcover whether they were his *diſciples indeed* or not; and that diſcovery was ſoon made, for his only telling of them that they ſhould *know the truth*, and the *truth ſhould make them free*, raiſed their reſentment. Now if men can believe the goſpel with *all their hearts*, and yet love the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God, if they can be *true believers*, and yet not *know the truth*, nor be *made free* by it, then he has proved his point; if not, he has done nothing towards it.

To introduce his next proof he tells us, that love is a labour, and we may be ſure that it is a work which God will not forget, *Heb.* vi. 10. and then turns us to 1ſt *Cor.* xiii. 2. in order to prove that true faith may be without love, p. 26. But it is pity the man had not read on to the next verſe, which contains as much of a proof that giving *all our goods to feed the poor* may be without *love*, as the other does that a faith of miracles may be without it; and both prove that all external works or gifts will not avail us, without they are done from

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right principles; but how does that prove that true faith will not produce love and good works? In the laſt verſe of that chapter the Apoſtle ſets faith before charity, and in *Gal.* v. 6. he ſays, *Faith works by love*, and I wonder how Mr. *M——n* thinks any can love and ſerve God here but only by faith, ſince thoſe objects are inviſible to ſenſe. *Peter* ſhews, that the way in which ſaints *love* and *rejoice* in an *unſeen* Chriſt, is by *believing*, 1ſt *Pet.* i. 8. and *Paul* ſhews *faith unfeigned*, as well as charity, to be ſo eſſential to true obedience, that all teaching that *ſwerves* therefrom he calls *vain jangling*, 1ſt *Tim.* i. 5—7. and I leave others to judge, who are now guilty of ſuch ignorant jangling.

To finiſh his proofs, our author turns us to the many nominal believers in our land, whoſe faith does not produce good works; to which he might have ſeen an anſwer in my 57th page, where I obſerved, that the Apoſtle *James* compares ſuch a faith to a *dead body*; but who would reject all bodies, becauſe there are ſome dead ſtinking ones? We read of the *ſpirit of faith*, and of *living by faith*; and thoſe pretenders to faith and grace who do not live ſo, *Jude* calls them *filthy dreamers*; but who will argue that our waking views do not govern our conduct, becauſe *dreams* do not commonly bring men off from their ſluggiſh beds! *Paul* ſays to ſome bad profeſſors among the Chriſtians, *Awake* to righteouſneſs and ſin not; for ſome have not the knowledge of God: I ſpeak this to your ſhame! It is a ſhame to any church to ſuffer ſuch members among them, 1ſt *Cor.* xv. 34. Again, to the ſaints at *Rome* he ſays, It is high time to *awake out of ſleep*; and whenever they are awak-

ed to the exerciſe of true faith, it will as certainly produce good works in every ſoul, as it moved *Abraham* to give up his darling at the divine command, or *Moſes* to count reproaches for Chriſt, greater riches than all the treaſures in *Egypt*, and enabled him to endure, as ſeeing him that is inviſible.

Before Mr. *M——n* began his remarks upon my piece, he entered a caution againſt being deceived by the power or tradition, p. 4. but he is not the firſt man who has been inſnared in the very thing he cautioned others againſt. Tradition has taught him to hold the ſix principles in *Heb.* vi. 1. as a ſummary of Chriſtian doctrine and practice, inſtead of viewing them as ſo many articles of the *Jewiſh* creed; and this has not a little influence in leading him into miſtakes about faith; for though he allows that faith ſometimes comprehends the whole counſel of God, yet he ſays, "Faith ſometimes comprehends "only one of the principles of the doctrine of "Chriſt, as in *Heb.* vi. 1." And after ſaying much upon it, he declares, that "God hath not promiſ-"ed eternal life upon that ſingle grace of faith, "as it is the belief of the truth, and one of the "principles of the doctrine of Chriſt," p. 18, 19. as if faith was but the ſixth part of religion; which is ſo far from truth, that the ſacred writer goes on, in the eleventh chapter of this ſame epiſtle, to ſhew that all the good which was ever done by ancient ſaints, was done *by faith.* One of thoſe principles, viz. *laying on of hands*, has cauſed a great deal of controverſy, both formerly and latterly; and we are informed by one who was no enemy to the practice, that it came among the Baptiſts

tiſts from the "Eſtabliſhed church, who uſe it un-
"der the name of *confirmation**." I do not mention this, as though I thought their holding it as a tradition, or the *Romaniſts* holding it as one of the *ſeven ſacraments*, was a ſufficient evidence againſt the practice, but only to put each one upon examination, whether they ſtand upon any thing better than tradition or not; neither ſhall I meddle here with that controverſy, farther than it concerns this text, for many things may be contained elſewhere, which are not in ſuch a particular text; though ſince ſuch great miſtakes concerning faith and ſalvation are drawn from this, I think it is a loud call to examine, whether we have not miſtaken its true meaning. The general rule given us to go by, is to compare ſpiritual things with ſpiritual. Now an evident deſign of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, was to explain to them the types of the ceremonial law, and ſhew their *perfect* fulfilment in Jeſus Chriſt; but the ſacred writer complains in the fifth chapter, that they were dull of hearing, and were like *babes* that had need of one to teach them *again*, which were the *firſt principles* of the oracles of God; and having obſerved that thoſe who are of full age, have their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil, he begins the ſixth chapter with calling them to *leave* the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt, and go on to *perfection*. Dr. *Gill* on the place ſays, the word tranſlated *firſt principles*, is the ſame word that in *Gal.* iv. 3, 9. is rendered *elements*, by which it is very evident that the ceremonies of the law are intended; and both

* Mr. *Croſby's* Hiſtory of the *Engliſh Baptiſts*, vol. IV. page 291.

both there and here, Chriſtians are reproved for their *childiſh* fondneſs for them.

Letters are the elements, or firſt principles of learning, which we teach children; but we expect them afterwards to *leave* their ſpelling, and go on to a more *perfect* manner of reading: So the firſt principles of the doctrine of Chriſt were taught by the *letters* of that law, which are all now clearly to be read in him who is the glorious WORD. Under the law they were to ſpell out the doctrine of *repentance from dead works*, by ſlain beaſts, and confeſſing their ſins over them; of *faith towards God*, as the God of *Iſrael*, in covenant with them; of cleanſing from pollution, by the divers *baptiſms* or *bathings*, which were commanded; of the laying our ſins upon Jeſus, by the *laying on of hands* on the ſacrifice, which was enjoined not leſs than a dozen times in *Leveticus*; the *reſurrection from the dead* was ſhadowed out by the two goats for a ſin-offering, one of which was to die, and the other be let go alive; ſome intimations alſo were then given of *eternal judgment*, but ſince the new-teſtament has taught us *repentance*, by looking on him whom we have pierced, to *believe* on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt for ſalvation, who ſaves by the *waſhing* of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt; has taught us that our ſins were *laid* on Chriſt, who bore them in his own body on the tree, died for our offences, and *roſe again* for our juſtification, and will come again to *judge* the world in righteouſneſs. Since theſe things are clearly opened in the goſpel, ſhall we ſtill be fond of the elements of the law? No, let us *leave* them, and go on to *perfection*; with which compare chap. ix. 9—12.

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which ſhew that the ſervice of the tabernacle was a *figure* for the time then preſent, in which were offered both gifts and ſacrifices, that could not make him that did the ſervice *perfect*, as pertaining to the conſcience, which ſtood only in meats and drinks, and divers *waſhings*, and carnal ordinances, impoſed on them until the time of reformation; but Chriſt being come an high prieſt of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, &c. the words *perfect* and *perfection* appear conſtantly to be uſed in this epiſtle, to diſtinguiſh the *ſubſtantial* bleſſings of the goſpel from the *ſhadows* of the law, as in chap. vii. 11, 19. and x. 1, 14. I find alſo, that the word in chap. ix. 10. which is rendered *waſhings*, is *baptiſms**, in the plural number, as it is here in the ſixth chapter; but the ſingular, *baptiſm*, is uſed about twenty times for an ordinance of the goſpel, and never once in the plural, as I can find, in all the new-teſtament; which is a further evidence, that theſe ſix principles are not a ſummary of the goſpel, but of the ceremonies of the law: And if it is not ſo, how can we account for it, that repentance and faith ſhould be named, and not hope and love? Or that baptiſm ſhould be expreſſed, and not a word of the Lord's ſupper, which is equally an ordinance of the goſpel?

If then repentance and faith are held in the language of *Moſes*, rather than *Paul*, no wonder if the *vail* remains upon ſuch hearts, ſo that they cannot with open face behold the glories of divine grace in

* See Dr. *Gill*, and other expoſitors on the place. Mr. *Purver*, in his late tranſlation of the bible, tranſlates the word *baptiſms* here as he does in the ſixth chapter.

in Jeſus Chriſt; and is not this the cauſe of our author's ſaying, "Shall we live by faith without "works, or ſhall we build our hope upon faith "and obedience, and not on faith only?" p. 20. Anſwer, he that builds his hope either upon faith or obedience, or upon both together, conſidered as our acts, builds upon the ſand; for *other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Chriſt Jeſus*; and if we are enabled to build upon him, ſtill the whole weight of all that is built muſt reſt upon that eternal rock. Mr. *M——n* proceeds to cite a large number of ſcriptures, which prove that all men will finally partake of the fruit of their doings, and then ſays, "I have been the "more particular upon this great duty of good "works, becauſe there are many in theſe latter "days, that ſeem to have little or no dependence "upon good works in order to ſalvation. It is "true, they will allow that good works are neceſ-"ſary to adorn a diſciple, but not to make a diſ-"ciple of Chriſt, though our Lord ſaith, ſo ſhall "ye be my diſciples, that is in bearing much fruit," p. 23. This is too plain to require much anſwer, though if the old gentleman ſhould live till next fall, I ſhould be glad if he would go into a good orchard, and examine carefully among all the trees, *adorned* with good fruit, whether he can find any fruit that *made* the tree good which it grows upon, or whether the tree does not evidence by this fruit, that it was a good tree before? And alſo to conſider well, whether the way to promote its future fruitfulneſs would be to turn up its *roots*, that it might now ſtand upon its lovely fruit! If he will then be pleaſed to read the following texts, I ſuppoſe

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he will have a ſufficient anſwer: *Matt.* xii. 33. *Rom.* xi. 18.

However, ſince he holds that good works *make* diſciples, and repreſents that we hold otherwiſe, becauſe we would obtain eternal life in a way "Eaſier than to cut off the right hand, or pluck out "the right eye, or to deny ſelf, and take up our "croſs, and follow Chriſt in the ſtrait and narrow "way," p. 21. I ſhall bring things a little nearer home; for if I am not much miſtaken, this very man holds the external acts of baptiſm, and laying on of hands, which are done but *once* in a perſon's life, to be ſo eſſential to *make* diſciples, that he will have no ſort of religious fellowſhip with any without them, while thoſe who have them are freely received to his communion, though they have no viſible worſhip *daily* in their families, nor *weekly* regard to the Lord's day, only in time of worſhip; notwithſtanding the ſame ſacred writer who calls us to *leave Jewiſh* principles concerning Chriſt, tells us that there *remaineth* a *reſt* (or *ſabbath*, as the margin has it) to the people of God, chap. iv. 9. Now obſerve, 1. his naming the *ſeventh day*, and then ſpeaking of *another day*, which *remaineth*, and giving a like reaſon to inforce the latter, as was given to inforce the former, plainly implies that a particular day of the week is referred to in both; for in verſe 4 he recites the reaſon by which the ſeventh day was inforced, and then to inforce this reſt that remaineth, ſays in ver. 10. *For* HE *that is entered into his reſt,* HE *alſo hath ceaſed from his own works,* AS GOD *did from his.* And as it is certain that the Son reſted from the work of redemption on the *firſt day*, as the Father did from

the work of creation on the *ſeventh*, who will dare to ſay that He, *He alſo*, that *reſted* AS GOD *did*, can mean any other than the Son, whom all men are required to *honour*, *even* AS *they honour the Father?* *John* v. 23.

2. It is readily granted, that the Apoſtle's aim is to engage ſouls to *hear* and *believe* the goſpel, whereby they *enter into* ſpiritual *reſt* here, and eternal *reſt* hereafter, which as much exceeds the reſt which *Jeſus*, i. e. *Joſhua*, gave *Iſrael* in *Canaan*, as heaven exceeds earth; the *goſpel* which *firſt gives reſt* to *heavy laden ſouls*, in order that they might take Chriſt's *yoke*, and *work* for him*; while the *law* enjoined *ſix days work* before their *reſt* on the *ſeventh*, and the long *fatigues* of the wilderneſs, before their *reſt* in *Canaan:* But how can the goſpel be heard without a *preacher*§, and without a *time* to meet for that purpoſe? Hence after our apoſtle had ſhewn, that the worſhip inſtituted by Chriſt was as much ſuperior to that appointed by *Moſes*, as the Son is ſuperior to a ſervant, and that Chriſt's houſe is his church, he immediately began his comment upon *David*'s words, which reach down to the place we are now upon; the tenor of all which is, to ſhew the importance of hearing and regarding the *voice* of Chriſt in his goſpel, and which is preached in his church, in this language, *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* And though this ſhould be the preacher's language in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon‖, yet that is ſo far from diſproving the appointment of a *ſtated ſeaſon* for worſhip under the goſpel, that it ſtrongly implies

* *Matt.* xi. 28. § *Rom.* x. 14. ‖ 2d *Tim.* iv. 2.

implies ſuch an appointment. For as our apoſtle began this ſubject, with obſerving the ſuperiority of the worſhip appointed in the Chriſtian church to that of the *Jews*; ſo he calls us in v. 14 to *hold faſt our profeſſion*; not only our faith, but alſo our profeſſion of it; which call is renewed in chap. x. 23—25, with a further explanation of how it is to be done, namely, by *conſidering one another, to provoke unto love and good works; not forſaking the aſſembling of ourſelves together, as the manner of ſome is; but exhorting one another*, &c. Neither meetings, days, nor ordinances, can be obſerved aright without faith; and if we are true believers, we *are come to the General Aſſembly, and church of the firſt-born, which are written in heaven*, chap. xii. 22, 23. And in the ſame chapter we are commanded to make *ſtrait paths for our feet*; but what *crooked* work do men make, if they take internals to exclude externals, or externals to exclude internals, or put one for the other, to ſuit their own turns. And may we not as juſtly ſay, becauſe we *are come* by faith to the *general aſſembly of the church*, that therefore we have no warrant for external church aſſemblies, as to argue, becauſe we which have believed *do enter into reſt*, that therefore no particular day now *remaineth* for Chriſtians to reſt in from all worldly affairs, notwithſtanding the text expreſly ſpeaks of *another day* which *remaineth* to the people of God, diſtinct from the *ſeventh*, inforced with a like reaſon as that was?

Again, though ſome make much uſe of *Paul's* caution againſt letting any man judge us in reſpect of an *holy-day, new-moon, ſabbath-days*, or *ordinances*; yet how plain is it, that he is there ſpeak-

ing of the *hand-writing of ordinances*, which Chriſt *took out of the way*, *nailing it to his croſs*, and ſo could not be retained in Chriſtian worſhip, only by the *traditions* and *commandments* of *men*? *Col.* ii. 14—22. But how *crooked* is it, to take what was ſpoken againſt *Jewiſh* ceremonies, to exclude goſpel ordinances, or the obſervation of the Lord's day? In the ſame chapter the apoſtle ſays, *Though I be abſent in the fleſh, yet am I with you in the ſpirit, joying and beholding your order*; and another apoſtle ſays, *Ye need not that any man teach you, but as the ſame anointing teacheth you of all things*; what warrant then have men or women to meet externally, to teach others, or hear others teach them? Let this be fairly anſwered, and we do not fear having as good an anſwer in the caſe before us.

Jewiſh ordinances were types of things to come, but Chriſtian ordinances are memorials of what is already done, and to ſtir us up to a right behaviour towards God, and towards each other; therefore let us never take what was written againſt the ceremonies of the law, to exclude any appointment of the goſpel: And ſince the Son of God reſted from the work of purchaſing our redemption, on the firſt day of the week, and we have the example of his diſciples meeting on that day, for worſhip, and to break bread, *John* xx. 19, 26. *Acts* xx. 7. Since the ſaints liberality, which is an *odour of a ſweet ſmell, a ſacrifice acceptable, well-pleaſing to God*, was commanded to be offered on that day, *Phil.* iv. 18. 1ſt *Cor.* xvi. 2. and as a table and ſupper, ſet apart from a common to a ſacred uſe, is called the *Lord's table*, and the *Lord's ſupper*, ſo we have a

day

day called the *Lord's day*, *Rev.* i. 10. therefore let us all *regard the day* to him.

Again our apoſtle ſays, *We have an altar* (by which he evidently means Chriſt) *by him therefore let us offer the ſacrifice of praiſe to God* CONTINUALLY, *that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name*, *Heb.* xiii. 10, 15. and as this was written to the *Hebrews*, who can doubt of his having reference here to their *morning* and *evening ſacrifice*, which they were commanded to offer upon the altar, *day by day continually*—a *continual* burnt offering thoughout their generations, *Exod.* xxix. 38, 42. which is afterward called the *continual* burnt offering, not leſs than ten times in two chapters*? And take notice, this ſpiritual ſacrifice is required to be offered *continually* with our *lips*; and what can that mean leſs than vocal addreſſes to the throne of grace, as often as their morning and evening offerings were? eſpecially when we remember that our Lord has taught his diſciples to pray after this manner, *Our Father*,—give us *this day* our daily bread; not this week, this month, or this year, but *this day*; how plainly does it imply our duty to come, not only perſonally in ſecret, but alſo unitedly in our families, to *our* Father, *every day?* We are alſo commanded to *pray always with all prayer*, *Eph.* vi. 18. and ſurely, *all prayer* includes family prayer as well as other.

Having given a little ſketch of the ſcripture authority for theſe duties, I can freely leave it with every conſcience to judge, whether it looks more like *denying ſelf*, and taking up our *croſs daily*, to riſe

* *Levit.* xxviii. and xxix. See more of this in my ſermon on Family Prayer.

riſe from our beds in the morning, and return to them again at night; to go to, and return from, our food, with no more viſible acknowledgment of our great preſerver and benefactor than the ox that eateth graſs; than it does to realize how dependent we are upon him continually, ſo as to have our prayer *daily* come up before him as incenſe, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening ſacrifice, and whenever we *eat*, to *give God thanks*, *Rom.* xiv. 6. And whether it looks more like plucking out a right eye, or cutting off a right hand, to make God's houſe ſo much a houſe of *merchandize*, as to carry *our worldly ſchemes* even into the intermiſſion of worſhip on the *Lord's day*, and not wait till the day is over, before we begin to *ſell corn*, and *ſet forth wheat*, than it does to *regard the whole day* as *holy to the Lord*, *and honourable*, and *honour him*, *not doing our own ways*, *nor finding our own pleaſure*, *nor ſpeaking our own words*. And though many are hypocritical while they pretend to theſe duties, yet may it not well appear ſurprizing, to ſee any profeſſed Chriſtians make that an excuſe for their own neglect, which is the ſame excuſe that infidels make for their neglect of all religion! as if others wrongs would excuſe us from doing right!

How far tradition may have inſnared and blinded good men, with reſpect to theſe things, I do not pretend to ſay: I have experienced enough in other traditions, to teach me the importance of treating all men with candour and charity, and yet to abhor the *lukewarmneſs* which many would cover under thoſe lovely names, whereby religion is treated as if it was only a piece of ſtate policy, that

that might be turned into any ſhape, as occaſion or intereſt ſuited. Charity is love to God and man, which moves the ſoul to reverence our Creator, and to regard our fellow-creatures in their ſeveral ſtations and relations; and all diſpoſitions and actions contrary thereto are ſin, let men call them what they will. *Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth*, and therefore moves thoſe who are under its influence to exert themſelves in their ſeveral ſtations, to promote the cauſe of truth in the world. And ſince the cuſtom of caſting off fear, and reſtraining prayer before God, greatly prevails in our nation and land, and alſo of prophaning the Lord's day with carnal ſchemes, eaſe or diverſions; and many ſtrengthen themſelves therein, by the looſe principles and conduct of ſome teachers and profeſſors, ſurely it is high time for us all to awake, and bear a more bold teſtimony againſt ſuch ways than has yet been done. What! ſhall we, under a pretence of owning every day to be the Lord's, rob him of a great part, or the whole, of the one day that is conſecrated for his worſhip! What! under a pretence of *ſpiritual* worſhip, ſhall we indulge our *carnal* eaſe and inclinations, till ſome awakening providence, or powerful influence, pulls us from our ſluggiſh beds! Shall a pretence of *heart-worſhip* any more be brought to excuſe the neglect of *confeſſing with our mouths*, and *daily* offering to God the fruit of our *lips*, giving thanks to his name! The apoſtle *James*'s language to the pretenders to faith and inviſible religion in his day was, *Shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will ſhew thee my faith by my works.* So now, ſhew to thy family, if thou canſt,

canſt, that thou doſt believe all good things come from God, while they rarely, if ever, hear thee worſhip him, or give him thanks therefor! Shew to any man, if you can, that you believe every day to be the Lord's, while you don't keep one day to him, without filling a great part of it with *your own ways*, and *your own pleaſures!*

The great point which brought ruin upon the *Jews*, was their refuſing to *render to God the fruits of his vineyard in their ſeaſons*; but inſtead of it, abuſing his ſervants, and then killing his Son, with this aim,—*The inheritance ſhall be ours*, *Matt.* xxi. 33—41. *Mark* xii. 1—9. And alas! how much of the ſame diſpoſition is working at this day, to try to get time, and all its advantages, to be *ours!* Surely their *deſolate* land, which *enjoys her ſabbaths*, *Levit.* xxvi. 34, 43. calls like thunder to us, to beware of ſuch ways, leſt, as we have greater light, we bring on ourſelves, and our land, a greater vengeance than they did. Indeed 'tis common for perſons now to exclaim againſt the old *Phariſees*, for their hypocriſy, *ſelfiſhneſs* and cruelty (juſt as they did againſt others, *Matt.* xxiii. 29—31) while they diſcover ſad tokens of their going in the ſame way, by ſeeking life, *not by faith, but as it were by the deeds of the law*; which deeds yet are only ſome *leſſer matters*, while *juſtice*, *mercy* and *faithfulneſs*, are neglected.

How far our author, or any of his admirers, are guilty in any of theſe reſpects, I don't pretend to determine, but leave that to God and their own conſciences; and am far from thinking myſelf better by nature that they: Yet who can hear men tell of "building their hope upon their faith and

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" obedience;" of " *Dependence* upon good works in " order to ſalvation," and that our good works not only *adorn*, but alſo " *Make* diſciples of " Chriſt," and not warn them of their danger! This is ſo far from the good old way to heaven, that *Job*, who was a *perfect* and *upright* walker, yet upon a near view of the divine Being, cried out, *Behold I am vile!* and again, *I abhor myſelf!* ſo far was he from truſting to himſelf or his doings, *Job* i. 1. xl. 4. and xlii. 6. The man after God's own heart was ſo far from building his hope upon his faith, or his works, that he ſays, *Thou art my hope, O Lord; thou art my truſt from my youth*; and when he was *old and grey-headed*, his language was, *I will go in the ſtrength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteouſneſs, even of thine* ONLY, *Pſal.* lxxi. 5, 16. A near view of a *holy* God, cauſed that eminent ſaint, the prophet *Iſaiah*, to cry out, *Wo is me, for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips!* and nothing could relieve him but a living application from God's *altar*, by which his *iniquity was taken away, and his ſin purged*; which moved him to ready obedience, ſaying, *Here am I, ſend me.* He would not go of his own head, but was ready to obey the divine call, *Iſa.* vi. 5—8. So now, we muſt all have our *conſcience purged from dead works, by Chriſt's blood*, in order to *ſerve the living God*, *Heb.* ix. 14. The character of goſpel believers is, they worſhip God in the ſpirit, rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have NO *confidence in the fleſh*; that is, in their own doings: And they are warned to *beware* of all that teach otherwiſe, as creatures that are both odious and dangerous, *Phil.* iii. 2, 3.

PART II.

Wherein is opened the Conſiſtency *and Duty of holding forth Divine Sovereignty, and Man's Impotency, while yet we addreſs their Conſciences with the Warnings of Truth, and Calls of the Goſpel.*

AFTER I had written the principal part of that diſcourſe upon faith, which I have now been vindicating, Mr. *Sandeman*'s letters were put into my hands, with a requeſt that I would carefully examine them, and remark on what I diſcovered to be amiſs; in doing of which, ſome things appeared to me to be of ſo dangerous a nature, that I thought it a duty to expoſe them publicly; and accordingly inſerted a few remarks in my introduction, referring to the body of the diſcourſe for a poſitive opening of my views of the right way. But a number of people, not obſerving that in a note, page 25, I had thus referred them forward, and ſuppoſing that the grand deſign of my writing was againſt him, have accuſed me of the ſame crime I charge upon him, *viz.* of only picking out what was wrong in writers, and paſſing over what was right. Whereas my firſt and main deſign had no concern with him, and as he owns that he has adopted the good ſentiments of others, "Without quoting them, or mentioning "their names," how could I do juſtice in reciting

them as his, when I knew not whoſe they were? Therefore I cited one excellent paſſage, and then endeavoured to point out ſome of the moſt dangerous ſnares that I diſcovered in his writings, referring to the following diſcourſe to explain my views of the truth. Nevertheleſs I freely acknowledge, that my love of brevity left ſome things in too much obſcurity, eſpecially upon the diſtinction between doctrinal and experimental knowledge. My idea of the difference is, that a perſon may truly be ſlain by the law, and made alive by the goſpel, and yet not know, perhaps not have a thought, that what he has experienced is the change called converſion; but doctrinal teaching may be a means of opening clearly to him, that it is the very change deſcribed in ſcripture by that name. Chriſt's diſciples had experienced *the way* of acceſs to the Father, yet they denied that they *knew* it, when he mentioned it under that name, *John* xiv. 4, 5. On the other hand, men may learn to talk orthodoxly or critically concerning theſe things, while they do not truly know them. This is the diſtinction I meant, and the occaſion of mentioning it was, his repreſenting that a man could not have "Known and preached, truſted, "and loved the Lord Jeſus Chriſt for many years," if now his mind was *relieved* and his *views* more *cleared* by his writings; and I ſtill think that repreſentation to be falſe: But I uſed one expreſſion that I now utterly retract, *viz. right* notions in the head, without knowing the truth in the heart; for I believe right ideas will always produce right effects upon our hearts and lives, and that all mens notions about truth, which do not produce ſuch effects,

effects, are not *right* notions; but a holding the *truth in unrighteouſneſs*, and *changing truth into a lie*; and thoſe who receive not the love of the truth will be damned, becauſe they *believe not the truth*; but *believe a lie*, *Rom.* i. 18, 25. 2d *Theſ.* ii. 10—12. and one well obſerves, that perhaps the lie they believed was, "That if they did penance, "and performed a number of good duties, they "ſhould by that means procure an intereſt in the "juſtifying righteouſneſs of Chriſt." And how much has this ſtrong deluſion ſpread through the world! Indeed the modes of *doing* are very different, ſome placing it more in external forms, others in internal exerciſes; and though they ſeem to differ greatly, yet how many agree in *doing for life*, inſtead of *receiving all by faith*, that they may *live unto God!* Probably ſome will ſay, theſe are Mr. *S———n*'s ſentiments: I know he ſuggeſts many ſuch things in his writings, and I would never oppoſe truth there any more than elſewhere; but I have ſeen as good wheat laid to bait a net, as that which is laid up in the garner; and an apprehenſion of a ſnare for ſouls, baited with choice truths and keen turns of wit, was the only occaſion of my writing againſt him; which ſnare appears in ſuch terms as theſe, "Aſſurance of hope is enjoy-"ed only by thoſe who give all diligence to ob-"tain it, in the ſelf-denied works of obedience;" and he ſays, "No man can be charged with the "ſin of diſbelieving the goſpel, for *doubting* if he "be a good Chriſtian; his chief hazard lies on "the other ſide;" yet in anſwer to his friend's requeſt of a clearer explanation of this point, he ſays, "We muſt not conſider the perſon advanc-

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" ing to the aſſurance of hope, as engaged in a " certain round of duties, ſo as his comfort ſhould " ariſe from a *conſciouſneſs* of his performing, or " deſigning to perform, them from *right motives*, " let them be called motives ariſing from the *faith*, " or by any other name: Thus the Chriſtian pro- " feſſion would become a *Phariſaical* ſcheme *." This is ſo far from truth, that if we could ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels, if we could underſtand all myſteries and all knowledge, and perform the *ſelf-denied works* of giving all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to the flames, yet unleſs theſe were performed from a *good principle*, and *right motives*, we ſhould ſtill *be nothing*, and all our doings *profit us nothing*, 1ſt *Cor.* xiii. 1—3. And though he aſſerts, that " A perſon " by being brought to the knowledge of the " truth, is not thereby led to think himſelf poſ- " ſeſſed of ſome *good principle*, by which he ſtands " more nearly *related to God* than he was, or than " other men; his comfort does not lie in think- " ing on any thing about himſelf, or any *change* he " has undergone; but he is comforted in think- " ing on what is *without* him, on what is *abſent* " from him, even on what is in heaven ‖." Yet *Paul* ſhews that the *good principle* of *charity* out of a *pure heart*, *good conſcience*, and *faith unfeigned*, is ſo eſſential to obedience, that he who *ſwerves* there- from, underſtands neither *what he ſays*, *nor where- of he affirms*; and that the ſaint is comforted in his near *relation to God*, by having the *ſpirit of adoption* ſent *into his heart*; and alſo by beholding the

* Epiſtolary Correſpondence, *Glaſgow* edition, page 86.
‖ *Ibid.* page 82, 83.

the divine glories, whereby he is *changed into the ſame image*; and he calls profeſſors to *examine* themſelves, for they ought to *know* that Chriſt is IN *them*, except they are *reprobates*, 1ſt *Tim.* i. 5—7. *Rom.* viii. 15. 2d *Cor.* iii. 18. and xiii. 5. This is ſo far from a *Phariſaical ſcheme*, that the very nature of the *Phariſees* ſcheme was, to make a great pretence of ſelf-denial and *outward* obedience, without any regard to an *inward change*, or acting from *right motives*.

And though the plan now before us talks much of the croſs and ſelf-denial, yet it is ſo much more fleſh-pleaſing than the *carnal ordinances* of the law, that the law appointed but *three feaſts* in a year for all the church to meet at; but this plan appoints *fifty-two*, and "Cannot allow any member to be "abſent from the *feaſt*, either through indifference, or meer inconvenience:" And it tacitly brands all with the name of *Phariſees*, who are againſt encouraging *all diverſions* public or private, which are not connected with circumſtances *really ſinful*: Which by the way would brand *Solomon* with that odious epithet, who after a thorough experience of ſuch *diverſions* ſays, It is *better* to go to the houſe of *mourning* than to the houſe of *feaſting*; for the heart of the *wiſe* is in the houſe of mourning; but the heart of *fools* is in the houſe of *mirth*: And it would condemn *Paul*, who was in *faſting often*, and ſays, Let your *moderation* be known to *all men*; and let us, who are of *the day*, *be ſober*, *Eccl.* vii. 2—4. 2d *Cor.* xi. 27. *Phil.* iv. 5. 1ſt *Theſ.* v. 8. Again Mr. *S*———*n* repreſents, that our writers in general upon the ſteps of the ſpirit's work in conviction and converſion, are

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"Much more hurtful to mankind, than writers "of *romances*;" and that the *pulpit* at preſent does *more hurt* than the *ſtage*; and ſpends eighteen pages artfully to repreſent, that the "Deity makes "little account of our thoughts through all the "buſy ſcenes of life;" but will likely receive "Condemned felons, at the end of it, into his "kingdom *." Theſe are the dangerous ſnares laid for ſouls, that occaſioned my writing againſt him, and not from any delight in controverſy with him or others; nor from any apprehenſion that his form of a church could greatly prevail, which caſts out every member that does not concur with the church in every circumſtance; for as an excellent author obſerves, "It is hardly conceiv-"able, that a great number of men ſhould *exactly* "agree upon a great number of different points, "without *any* variation, unleſs they *contrive* to "agree together for the ſake of carrying on ſome "particular ſcheme ‖."

How far his ſcheme has had an influence on many to neglect all church-fellowſhip, becauſe they cannot find a perfect church in this wilderneſs; and how far it has emboldened ſinners to treat all awakening preaching and writings with ſcorn and neglect, rather following ſtage-plays, romances, or other devices of their own hearts, with hopes ſtill of being received into the kingdom of heaven at laſt; and if conſcience galls them, to try to eaſe it with ſome critical ſpeculations, or outward forms, ſtifling

* Letters on *Theron*, &c. vol. II. page 40, &c. alſo page 61, 103.

‖ Thoughts on Education, by the author of *Britain's Remembrancer*, page 16.

ſtifling convictions of their hypocriſy, with the conceit that *doubting* is a good ſign, and that to be concerned to know whether we have experienced a ſaving *change*, ſo as to act from *good principles*, is *Phariſaical!* I ſay, how far his ſcheme has influenced theſe things, I leave with the Judge before whom we muſt all ſoon appear; but as legaliſts and libertines both charge thoſe with *inconſiſtency*, who hold forth the doctrine of man's impotency and divine ſovereignty, and yet earneſtly addreſs their conſciences with the warnings of truth, and calls of the goſpel; and as falſe *imaginations* concerning this matter are the ſtrongeſt *hold* that Satan has left, to keep his *goods in peace*, I ſhall a little further offer my mite towards pulling it down: In order to which, it is needful to take a brief ſurvey of the nature both of the law and goſpel.

As to the law, our Lord has given us a ſummary of it, in as clear terms as can be uſed: "Thou "ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, "and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength, "and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as "thyſelf.—This do and thou ſhalt live," *Luke* x. 27, 28. Love is the temper of happineſs, and without it there can be none, and the nobler its object the greater the happineſs, and the eaſier to obey the precept; how holy, juſt, and good, then is this law, which requires our higheſt love to the ſupreme fountain of being and excellency, and our ſubordinate love to all other beings, according to their relation and connexion to him and to us? This law then conſtituted an union of heart between the whole ſyſtem of rational beings, which influenced to all right behaviour toward each

other, according to their ſeveral ſtations and relations; and the fruit of ſuch behaviour is, *This do and thou ſhalt live.* Hence learn,

I. That the nature of this law is immutable and perpetual, and it is as vain for any one ſoul to think of ever being exempted for one moment from obligation to love God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourſelves, as to think of dethroning him, or annihilating our own ſouls; for as long as we remain his creatures, 'tis impoſſible but that we muſt remain under obligation to love and obey him.

II. Here we may learn the true nature of ſin; it is the *tranſgreſſion of this law*; it is a revolt from the Creator, and ſetting up the creature in his ſtead, *Rom.* i. 25. Hence we are told, that of the three *Hebrew* words ordinarily uſed for it, tranſgreſſion ſignifies *rebellion*; iniquity, *crookedneſs, perverſeneſs*; and ſin, a *miſſing the mark**. And ſurely the ſource of all our woes was a *rebellion* againſt our rightful king and lawgiver, and turning aſide to our own *crooked, perverſe* ways, whereby we *miſs the mark* both of our duty and happineſs; and the immediate conſequence was loſs of union and communion with God, which is *ſpiritual death*; innumerable evils in this world, that at length diſſolve the union between ſoul and body, which is *natural death*; and finally will be the caſting of ſoul and body into the burning lake, which is *eternal death*; all which are the juſt *wages of ſin.* And mark it, death is to be always viewed according to its nature; the death of a rational ſoul is as different from that of the body, as ſpirit is from clay;

* Dr. *Gill's* Expoſition on *Pſal.* li. 1, 2.

clay; the body without union with the ſoul can do nothing at all; the ſoul without union with God can do nothing right; but a ſoul *dead in ſin* ſtill *walks*, and is ſometimes more active than a ſaint, and for this plain reaſon, the ſinner's powers are all bent one way, while the ſaint has in him, as it were, the company of two armies, ſo that the children of this world are in their generation *wiſer than the children of light*, *Luke* xvi. 8. *Eph.* ii. 1, 2. Hence all attempts to repreſent addreſſes to ſinners conſciences, to be like addreſſes to ſenſleſs carcaſes, are attempts *to darken counſel*, and belong to the kingdom of darkneſs.

III. How vain are mens hopes of getting life by their own *doings*, in any ſhape whatever? Chriſt ſays, THIS DO *and thou ſhalt live*; it is not wouldings, promiſes or endeavours, that will avail without *doing*, doing *this*; *this* perfect, *this* univerſal, *this* immutable law of love; *love* to God and man, *love* with all our *ſoul* and *mind*, as well as ſtrength. Therefore the law is *ſpiritual*, but we are *carnal*; all inclinations as well as actions that are contrary, or that do not come up to this law of love, are ſin; hence our Lord, upon occaſion of a lovely youth who had ſhewn an outward regard to the law all his days, and yet had ſuch a love to this world, that he would not part with it for Chriſt, declared to his diſciples, that it is *eaſier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle*, than for ſuch a man to enter into the kingdom of heaven; but they being aſtoniſhed, he adds, *with man it is impoſſible, but not with God*, *Mark* x. 17—27. Two things make it *impoſſible* with man, one is, he cannot make up his paſt breach of the law, and the other is, he

cannot now turn his heart from earth to heaven, though God can do both; which brings us,

IV. To the nature and design of the gospel. Man was become a *rebel* against the eternal King, by breaking the best of all laws, by which he had forfeited life, and was neither able to satisfy for his crime, nor to change his heart; therefore the King's Son engaged to do the one, and the holy spirit to effect the other; not by abating the law, as some vainly dream; no, Jesus warns us against such a *thought*, and declares, that *Till heaven and earth pass, one* JOT *or one* TITTLE *shall in no wise pass from the law, till* ALL *be fulfilled*, *Matt.* v. 18. He fulfilled it by taking the rebels place, and obeying and suffering for our sins, *The just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*; that God might be *just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*; might justify the *ungodly*, *Rom.* iii. 26. and iv. 5. 2d *Cor.* v. 18—20. 1st *Pet.* iii. 18. In consequence of which, the gospel *Proclaims liberty to prisoners* and *captives*, *Isa.* lxi. 1. *Luke* iv. 18. Surely not an exemption from the King's authority and government! No; but liberty from the just sentence of *death*, from Satan's *tyranny*, and from the *bondage of corruption*, into the glorious *liberty of the sons of God*; liberty to serve him in *newness of spirit*, and *not in the oldness of the letter*, *Rom.* vii. 6. The oldness of the letter was, The man that *doth them* shall *live in them*; *this do and thou shalt live*; *but cursed is every one that continueth not to do all.* The newness of the spirit is, Christ delivers from the *curse*, and gives the *blessing*; gives the covenant blessing of the spirit to

write

write the law in our *hearts*, with this tenor, *I will*, and *they ſhall*, *Gal.* iii. 10—14. *Heb.* viii. 10. The oldneſs of the letter promiſed life upon doing, but gave no ſtrength to do; the newneſs of the ſpirit ſays, As thy days, ſo ſhall thy ſtrength be; my grace is ſufficient for thee; I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee: It calls us to come boldly to the throne of grace for all the help we need. The oldneſs of the letter gives no encouragement to come only upon our own doings, and ſets a flaming ſword in the way of the guilty; but the newneſs of the ſpirit directs us to take all our encouragement to come, from the merits, interceſſion and promiſe of our great High Prieſt, who has engaged *juſtice* and *faithfulneſs* to *forgive* the guilty, and to *cleanſe* the filthy, *Heb.* iv. 14—16. 1ſt *John*, i. 9. As the ſtrength of ſin is the law, the letter arms the *accuſer* againſt the ſoul that daily breaks it; but the ſpirit enables the believer to *overcome* him, by the *blood* of the Lamb, and by ſuch a view of heavenly glories, as to carry their *love* even above *life* itſelf, *Rev.* xii. 11. In a word, the *letter killeth*, but the *ſpirit giveth life*, 2d *Cor.* iii. 6.

Yet notwithſtanding this diſtinction is written ſo plain that he may run that reads it, many ſtill dwell upon the oldneſs of the letter, and reckon it "Strange and unaccountable, that any ſhould "aſſert that there is nothing to be *done by ſin-* "*ners in order* to their ſalvation, beſide believ- "ing*!" as if they had never read *Rom.* iii. 28, and iv. 5.

I ſup-

* Dr. *Mayhew*'s ſermons on ſtriving to enter the ſtrait gate, page 31, 32.

I ſuppoſe this author has ſtated this point as fairly as any have done on that ſide of the queſtion. He ſays, "The queſtion is, whether unregenerate ſinners, under the diſpenſation of the goſpel, have *any* day of grace and ſalvation afforded to them, in ſuch a ſenſe, that they ſhall certainly obtain eternal life, provided they heartily deſire it, and ſtrive to that end?" And he aſſerts, that "There is a certain connexion between ſinners ſtriving to obtain the ſalvation which God has revealed, and their actually obtaining it ‖."

But what is *the* ſalvation which God has revealed? It is from *enemies* to be *reconciled* and *ſaved* by his Son, *Rom.* v. 10. And what is there to be *done* by ſinners, in *order* to *this* ſalvation? Their rebellion is atoned for by the King's Son, and he *beſeeches* and *prays* them to be *reconciled*; how then can the ſinner *heartily deſire this* ſalvation, and yet have ſomething to *do*, before he obtains it? 2d *Cor.* v. 20. And what do men mean by a day of grace, if 'tis the day in which the King proclaims the goſpel way of reconciliation, and ſends his ſervants to preach to ſinners, and his ſpirit to *ſtrive* with them, while his long-ſuffering *waits*; yet ever with this language, Behold, NOW is the accepted time, behold, NOW is *the day* of ſalvation! Come, for all things are *now ready*, 1ſt *Pet.* iii. 18—20. 2d *Cor.* vi. 2. *Luke* xiv. 17. Such a day of grace we readily grant all ſinners under the light of the goſpel have. But if the goſpel ſays, *Come, all things are now ready*, and the ſpirit *ſtrives* to convince the ſinner of the truth of it; I deſire to know

‖ *Ibid.* page 46.

know what the ſinner's *ſtriving* is before he comes? We all know, that *ſtriving* implies *reſiſtance* of one againſt another; and thoſe who in ancient time enquired ſo often what they *ſhould do*, *Stephen* plainly told them to their heads what they *did do*:—Ye *do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt*, *Acts* vii. 51.

There can be no half-way; the inſtant we believe the goſpel, we are reconciled to God, and unite in ſtriving againſt all his and our enemies, *ſtriving* according to his working in and by us, *Col.* i. 29. *Phil.* iii. 14. And if we are not united with him, we *believe* not the *truth*, but have *pleaſure* in *unrighteouſneſs*, let us talk of ſpeculative faith, or good deſires, what we will, 2d *Theſ.* ii. 12. And to talk of repentance before faith, is more abſurd ſtill; for who ever was ſorry for any action, before he believed it to be ſome way diſagreeable! It is conviction of the *truth* of the law that cauſes legal repentance, and looking by *faith* on him whom we have pierced, produces evangelical repentance: Hence *Paul*'s conſtant teſtimony both to *Jews* and *Greeks* was, *Repentance* toward God, and *faith* toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Acts* xx. 21. He firſt taught them their caſe before God, as breakers of his law, and then the way of reconciliation, by faith in Chriſt, who has fulfilled it; with which compare *Mark* i. 15. The Pſalmiſt, when his heart was inditing good matter concerning *Zion*'s King, deſcribes this work in a very elegant manner, which is, that being armed with *truth*, meekneſs and righteouſneſs, he in his majeſty rides forth proſperouſly, and darts his arrows into his *enemies hearts*; and all know that a wound there is death; accordingly they *fall under him*;

him; but how ſtout is the rebel that will fight till he dies! *Paul* can tell experimentally the nature of this death; it was death to his own *doings*, and the *hope* he built upon them, and he was *ſlain* thereto by the light of this holy law, which diſcovered to him the *deceit* of his heart, which had operated in all his doings, *Rom.* vii. 9—14. *Phil.* iii. 4—9. Theſe appear to the ſinner *terrible things*; but how is the ſcene changed, when he ſees the *ſceptre of righteouſneſs* preſented from the *throne*, which gains the *enemy* to become the *Queen*, moſt gloriouſly adorned! Thus are God's people *made willing* in the day of his *power*, to ſerve him in the *beauty of holineſs*, *Pſal.* xlv. and cx. *Heb.* i. 8, 9.

I have been the more particular here to detect the deceit and blindneſs of the attempts that are often made, to repreſent irreſiſtible grace to be inconſiſtent with the ſoul's liberty of choice; for here are deſcriptions of the work of grace that are abſolutely irreſiſtible, if any thing can be ſo; and yet there is not the leaſt violence uſed with man's will, for the enemy is conquered with the full conſent of all his heart: He is ſlain and made alive by the power of truth. And further to detect the deluſion of many, and the falſe reaſonings that are often uſed concerning ſinners impotency, we will take a plain inſtance.

In the late rebellion in our nation, a hope of being *able* to uſurp the throne, moved the rebels to invade *England*; but when they had marched within a hundred miles of *London*, that hope *failed* them, the effect of which was a haſty retreat back to *Scotland*; though by the way a hope of being

ing *able* to keep the ſtrong city of *Carliſle* againſt their Sovereign, cauſed them to leave a party in it for that purpoſe; but the Duke of *Cumberland* ſoon convinced them of their miſtake, and then they hung out a ſign; and upon his demanding its meaning; they ſaid they wanted to *capitulate*. He replied, that he ſhould enter into no *capitulation* with *rebels!* they ſhould ſurrender to the King's mercy: They did accordingly. Now let us ſee where we are; it has been ſufficiently proved that ſinners are rebels againſt heaven, and that they will ſtand out in their rebellion till they are conquered; and if it would have been diſhonourable to the King of *England* to have capitulated with theſe rebels, which yet were his fellow-men; what madneſs muſt it be to attempt to capitulate with rebels againſt the eternal God! What can all the noiſe mean concerning a day of grace, and good works for ſinners to *do before* they are reconciled to the King of heaven, but only *inventions* of men to *keep off* from ſurrendering to Sovereignty, in hopes by and by to come in upon better terms! in hopes at laſt to be received, not as rebels, but ſubjects, who all along had a good regard for their King, and only happened to be impoſed upon in ſome things. But be not deceived, God is not mocked; and all things are naked and opened to his eyes; all mens buildings which are not laid upon his precious *corner ſtone*, are nothing but *refuges of lies*, and God ſays, the *Hail ſhall ſweep them away*, *Pſal.* xxviii. 15—17.

As to power or ability, who need be told, that *in* nations, and *between* nations, the way to keep enemies from doing miſchief, is to keep them ſen-

ſible of their *inability* to do it? Even captives in the hands of ſavages whom they hate mortally, yet if they find they are *unable* to eſcape or to withſtand them, tney will be careful not to offend their cruel maſters; how much more then will conviction, even in a carnal mind, that it *cannot* eſcape from, nor withſtand a holy God, reſtrain it and regulate its conduct? It is to this that we are indebted for much of the order and regulation in the world, which many falſly aſcribe to mens good nature, and then turn it as an argument againſt the truth!

A ſenſe of impotency has like effect upon the principle of *hope* as it has upon *fear*; as long as perſons can hope to ſhift along themſelves, they do not love to be dependent and beholden to others, but the clearer their ſenſe is of being *unable* to do without others help, the more earneſt will be their cries therefor. The *poor* uſeth *intreaties*, but the *rich* anſwereth *roughly*. The wicked through the *pride* of his countenance *will not ſeek after God*, *Prov.* xviii. 23. *Pſal.* x. 4. How pernicious then are all thoſe teachings that flatter the ſinner's *pride*, by telling him of a great deal that he *can do*, and *muſt do*, in *order* to his coming to Chriſt! And as falſe and murderous to ſouls are all pretences that *impotency* can excuſe any from their obligation this moment to *receive* God's *teſtimony*, and ſet to their *ſeal that he is true*. Many plead *impotency*, and pretend *honeſty* in their reſtraining *prayer* before God; but they prove themſelves *liars* in theſe very pretences; for profane mariners, who often pretend *honeſty* in not ſeeking to God, becauſe they *cannot* do it aright, yet when once they are brought to their *wits end*, and

and find they *cannot* deliver themſelves, *Then they cry unto him*, *Pſal.* cvii. 27, 28. Even an heathen ſhip-maſter could with aſtoniſhment aſk *Jonah What he meant* to neglect it at ſuch a time! *Jonah* i. 6. Could they be *honeſt* in neglecting ſuch things, when they ſaw no danger, and yet be conſtrained to practiſe them when eternity appeared near! No; a deceived heart, and a deceiving devil, has turned them aſide, to hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs.

A rational ſoul is always governed in its choice, by the preſent ideas it has of what is beſt, let thoſe ideas be true or deluſive. Thoſe who fall into the hands of ſavages, if they judge it beſt not to ſubmit, they will chooſe to ſell their lives as dear as they can; but if they judge it beſt to ſubmit, then they will chooſe to be on as good terms with them as they can: And ſays Dr. *Owen*, "To ſuppoſe that "in all things of a ſpiritual and eternal concern-"ment, that men are not determined and actuated "every one by his own judgment, is an imagi-"nation of men who think but little of what they "are, or do, or ſay, or write. Even thoſe who "*ſhut their eyes* againſt the light, and follow in the "herd, *reſolving* not to enquire into any of theſe "things, do it, becauſe they *judge it beſt for them "ſo to do* *." Hence ſin is called the works of *darkneſs*; and Satan's kingdom, the kingdom of *darkneſs*; and the way he has to keep any rational ſouls therein is, by *blinding* the minds of them that *Believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel ſhould ſhine unto them:* Yea, and they concur with him, for their *Ears are dull of hearing*, and *their eyes have* THEY CLOSED, leſt they ſhould ſee, hear, *underſtand*,

* Dr. *Owen*'s Guide to Fellowſhip, page 74.

derstand, and be *converted*, 2d *Cor.* iv. 4. *Acts* xxviii. 27. It was only by *this ignorance* that the murderous *Jews* could get along in their actings against Jesus; for had they *Known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, 1st *Cor.* ii. 8.

One grand scheme of the learned free-willers of our day, to blind their own and others minds against these truths, is, to assert a self-determining power *in* the will, a power to act with motive, or against motive, just as the will pleases; but how little are such men aware, that they in this point *approve* of the deed of father *Adam*, at the same time that they deny their concern in it? The serpent proposed it as a grand enlargement of our first parents *liberty*, that they should *Know both good and evil*; should be *free* to both; and he pretended that this was to be *as Gods*; they ventured to try the experiment, ventured to act against a good motive, in order to be free to act either way as they pleased afterwards; but they found by sad experience that the serpent *lied* in this proposal.

With reverence be it spoken, the eternal God never had, nor never can have, such a liberty as these men tell of; for it is *impossible* for him to *lie*, and he *cannot be* so much as *tempted with evil*, *Heb.* vi. 18. *Jam.* i. 13. These mens learned master *Locke* tells them plainly what they are doing: Says he, "Is it worth the name of *freedom* to be at *li-*
"*berty* to play the fool, and draw shame and mi-
"sery upon a man's self? If to break loose from
"the conduct of reason, and to want examina-
"tion and judgment, which keep us from choos-
"ing or doing the worse, be true liberty, mad-
"men and fools are the only freemen; but yet I
"think

"think nobody would chooſe to be mad for the "ſake of ſuch liberty, but he that is mad alrea-"dy *." And he goes on to obſerve, that, "As "the higheſt perfection of intellectual nature, lies "in a careful and conſtant purſuit of true and ſo-"lid happineſs; ſo the care of ourſelves, that we "miſtake not imaginary for real happineſs, is the "neceſſary foundation of our liberty, and the "ſtronger ties we have to an unalterable purſuit of "happineſs in general, which is our greateſt good, "and which as ſuch our deſires always follow, the "more are we free from any neceſſary determina-"tion of our *will* to any particular action, or "from a neceſſary compliance with our deſire, ſet "upon any particular, and then appearing great-"er good, *till* we have duly examined whether it "has a tendency to, or be inconſiſtent with our *real* "happineſs.—I deſire it may be well conſidered, "whether the great inlet, and exerciſe of all the "liberty men have, are capable of, or can be uſe-"ful to them, and that whereupon depends the "turn of their actions, does not lie in this, that "they can ſuſpend their deſires, and ſtop them "from determining their *wills* to any action, till "they have duly and fairly examined the good and "evil of it, as far forth as the weight of the "thing requires †."

Thus far this great reaſoner has followed the clear line of truth, yet in the next words he turns into the dark way, by ſaying, "This we can do." If he had ſaid, we can do it when we are aſſiſted with divine light and truth, he had ſaid well; but without

* Eſſay upon Underſtanding, B. ii. Chap. 21. § 50.
† *Ibid.* § 51, 52.

without ſuch a proviſo the matter is left in the dark, becauſe evil imaginations and deſires have already got the ſtart of reaſon, ſo that it can never bring them back to a fair examination without divine influence. Who is there that need be told, that if the judge is previouſly *biaſed*, we are not like to have a fair trial before him? Yet we are all ſo in this caſe; for a fair examination will certainly ſhew that *ſelf* is guilty; and if only a *gift* from *another* will *blind* the eyes of the wiſe, and *pervert* the words of the *righteous*; how much more will the honour, eaſe, yea life of *ſelf*, blind the eyes of *ſinners*, and hold them from a fair conſideration of this caſe? For as God is the only fountain of all good, unbiaſed reaſon cannot but determine that every rational ſoul who loves and purſues any thing whatſoever as good, ſeparate from, and in neglect of him, is certainly guilty; yet that is what we have *all* done, though all do not purſue it in the ſame courſe, for we have turned every one to *His own way*, *Iſa.* liii. 6. But who ever heard a judge give in a ſentence, the immediate effect of which would bring himſelf from the bench to the bar, as a guilty priſoner? Since therefore reaſon is already biaſed, divine revelation is erected as the tribunal to decide this controverſy: And wherever it truly takes place, it produces the effect juſt now mentioned; a notable inſtance of which we have recorded, *Acts* xxiv. 24, 25. A *Roman* governor and judge had the curioſity to ſend for his priſoner to hear him concerning the *faith in Chriſt*; but as the priſoner addreſſed the *reaſon* of the judge, concerning righteouſneſs, temperance, and a judgment to come, the ſcene

was

was remarkably changed; for the *Roman* judge inſtantly becomes a *trembling* priſoner, while the priſoner is the King's officer to ſummon him to anſwer for his conduct at the awful bar. This was ſo diſagreeable that he *put off* any further hearing for *that time*, and we have no grounds to think that the *convenient ſeaſon* he flattered himſelf with ever came; and if not, then he is now a *ſpirit in priſon*; while the record of his caſe ſtands for a warning to all others againſt the like *diſobedience*, while the long-ſuffering of God waits with them, 1ſt *Pet.* iii. 19, 20.

But alas! inſtead of taking warning, we all naturally have the lawyer's diſpoſition, who was willing to *juſtify himſelf*; his mind was biaſed that way: But how could he do it? Why he leaves God out of the queſtion, and ſays, *Who is my neighbour?* This is a notable way to try rebels! for the judge to leave the King out of the queſtion, and only examine their behaviour to each other! Yet how poorly does he make out even in this way? For though they eſteemed themſelves ſo much better than the *Samaritans*, that they would have *no dealings* with them, yet our Lord ſets before him a caſe in their own country, between *Jeruſalem* and *Jericho*, which *Jewiſh* writers ſay, was then a ſtation for prieſts and *Levites**, of one of each of thoſe high characters who could *look* upon one whoſe caſe loudly called for their *compaſſion*, without being moved with it; but a *Samaritan* really acted the *neighbour* in the caſe, as the lawyer was forced to acknowledge: Jeſus ſays, *Go and do thou likewiſe*, *Luke* x. 29—37. Note by the way, he

* See Dr. *Gill* on the place.

he does not ſay of this branch as he does of the whole law, This do and thou ſhalt live; no, yet he expreſly ſhews, that this is binding on us all to be done, while the other is not to be left undone. This condemns all thoſe who would either abate the law to bring it down to our ability, or in the leaſt turn off its authority, and their obligation always to obey it, becauſe of their inability.

However, though the attempt has often been made to juſtify ſelf by leaving God out of the queſtion, yet no rational perſon could ever entirely eraſe out of his mind an apprehenſion of a deity; therefore the common way, ever ſince man contracted a diſlike to the true God, has been to make falſe ones to ſuit their own turn. When *Iſrael* rejected their true King, they made them *Idols according to their own underſtanding*, *Hoſ.* xiii. 2, 10. and ſo it is now. Some make up a deity in their minds, ſo fond of devotion, as to accept them for good worſhipers, although they ſecretly grind the faces of the poor, and ſhut their hearts and hands againſt the needy. Others, viewing that way to be odious, frame an imagination of one who cares little for devotion, if men are but honeſt and kind to their neighbours. Though a third ſort, not chooſing to be under either of theſe reſtraints, frame a god that loves liberty, and their tongues would ſet him ſo high as not to concern himſelf with the conduct of worms, but leave them to gratify their own inclinations, provided they do but act as good fellows with each other; yet after all their great *ſwelling words*, they make their airy deity to be ſuch an one as they ſcorn to be them-

themſelves, even ſuch a *jack at a pinch*, that whenever they find that they cannot indulge themſelves any longer here, he ſhall be ready at their call, and take them directly to Paradiſe!

Oh! when will *brutiſh* and *fooliſh* man be *wiſe!* He that planted the ear, ſhall he not hear? He that formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee? He that chaſtiſeth the *heathen*, ſhall not he correct? Yes verily, for he knoweth that the *thoughts* of man are *vanity*, *Pſal.* xciv. 1—11.

From what has been proved, I appeal to every conſcience whether the following concluſions are not certain truth.

I. That all the love and good behaviour that we can poſſibly have to our fellow-creatures, while our hearts are not truly united to our Creator, want the nature of true obedience, as much as the love and good order that may be in an army of rebels, wants of true obedience to their lawful Sovereign, when they are not reconciled to him.

II. The reaſon why all men do not judge it to be ſo, is, becauſe their *underſtandings* are *darkened* by an *alienation* and *bias* the other way, *Eph.* iv. 18. Therefore,

III. For them to ſet up their reaſon againſt divine revelation, either to exclude any part of it, or to turn it aſide from its plain genuine meaning, is as criminal as it can be for a *biaſed* judge to aſſume a power to *diſpenſe* with any of the King's laws, or by falſe gloſſes and falſe evidences to *pervert* them from their juſt deſign, in order to acquit the guilty, or to condemn the innocent.

IV. All reaſonings for an abatement of the law, or for the neglect of preſent obedience to it, be-

cauſe of our impotency, are pleas for the worſt kind of treaſon and robbery; for God is infinitely lovely, and deſerving of all our love, worſhip and obedience, and the only reaſon why we cannot yield him all, is, becauſe we do not *Like to retain him in our knowledge*, but *love* and ſerve the *creature* inſtead of the *Creator*; one ſetting up *gain*, and another his *belly*, in God's place, thus *robbing* him of his right, *Rom.* i. 24, 27. *Tim.* vi. 5. *Phil.* iii. 19. *Matt.* iii. 7—9.

V. All pleas againſt ſurrendering this moment to divine ſovereignty, and receiving his proclamation of mercy in the goſpel with all our hearts, are nothing but pleas ſtill to adhere to the devil againſt the eternal God! They often ſay they cannot believe; but the only way that they have to keep from believing, is to ſhut their eyes and ears againſt the light and evidence of *truth*, and to join with the prince of darkneſs and his inſtruments to try to ſet up *falſhood* in its ſtead. They pretend to enquire for evidence of the truth of God's *promiſe*, while they are *willingly ignorant* that all things in *heaven* and *earth* have evidenced the power and truth of his *word* from the beginning, and will do ſo to the *day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men*, 2d *Pet.* iii. 4—7. All pleas for not believing the goſpel, are pleas to *make God a liar*, and to adhere to the *father of lies* inſtead of him, 1ſt *John*, iii. 8. and v. 10.

VI. Therefore it is perfectly *conſiſtent* for him plainly to ſet life and death before all men by the miniſtry of his word, and call them all to *turn and live*; although he does not intend to exert his almighty power to ſave any others but

thoſe

thoſe that he has *given to his Son*, *John* vi. 37. and xvii. 2.

VII. To make the doctrine of God's ſecret decrees any objection or excuſe againſt a preſent and conſtant regard to his revealed will, is nothing leſs than to deny either his ability or his right to govern us; for it is eſſential to good government, to have a plan laid by the ruler, as well as rules given to the ſubject, to which each ſhould adhere in its place; and muſt not unbiaſed reaſon give in, that the more compleat the plan is, and the leſs need of alteration, the better? And ſhould you hear a perſon ſay, 'If I thought it was not in my 'power to penetrate into the King's ſecrets, or to '*alter* his counſels, I would never pretend to obey 'his laws,' would you think him to be a ſubject or a rebel! Yet what can mens objections againſt the *unalterable* nature of the divine decrees, mean leſs than this? It is eſſential to moral government, that laws and rules ſhould be given to men in a conditional form, enforced with the conſideration of the rewards of obedience, and puniſhments of diſobedience: And the juſt ruler will ever keep thereto in his adminiſtrations; but that is ſo far from excluding a ſecret plan, that it neceſſarily implies ſuch an one; it implies, that as far as the ruler's wiſdom and power can reach, he will be provided for all that ſhall happen, ſo as to be ready to do himſelf and his ſubjects juſtice, and not to be diſappointed, nor loſe his or their rights in any inſtance.

I ſuppoſe the art of man cannot ſet the *Arminian* notion of grace in a fairer light than this, *viz.* our late King, after the moſt criminal rebels were

executed, pardoned others, and yet put them upon the trial of ſome difficult ſervice for a time, before he confirmed their eſtates and privileges to them; ſo that their future welfare was *ſuſpended* upon their doings. But then you muſt know, that as he had neither atonement for their crimes, nor power to change their hearts, if he had pardoned the chief rebels, it would have endangered the peace of the kingdom, if not his own crown, and there was reaſon for holding others in ſuſpence, becauſe he did not know their hearts, nor what their future conduct would be; and do men worſhip ſuch a God as that! Again, law and juſtice require that each one has his due, but many involve themſelves ſo as not to be able to pay their debts, and rather than loſe all, many creditors will take up with a little part of their juſt due, and forgive the reſt; and ſome, in hope of future gain, will truſt the ſame perſons again. This agrees with *Arminian* notions. But a few years ago there was an act made which emboldened a number of villains to launch out and get as much as they could of others eſtates into their hands, in hopes of being reſcued from juſtice by this pretended act of grace. This is like the *Antinomians*: Both of them would ſet up mercy to the injury of juſtice and truth, inſtead of meeting God at the true mercy-ſeat, where they agree and kiſs each other. Both are for keeping off, one in hopes of compounding, or elſe of paying his debts with counterfeit money; the other to indulge himſelf as long as he can, with hopes at laſt to eſcape juſtice by pleading the bankrupt-act.

But let not men thus delude themſelves, our eternal King is a *juſt God*, as well as a *Saviour*, *Iſa.* xlv.

xlv. 21. and he will ſee that juſtice is done through the univerſe, and every ſoul ſhall be either brought to a reckoning here, and receive a clear diſcharge by our glorious ſurety, yea and *quickly* too; or elſe be caſt into that *priſon* from whence they can by *no means* come out till they have paid the *uttermoſt farthing*, *Matt.* v. 25, 26. And there is not a ſinner upon earth that believes his debts to be ſo great as they are, nor that they are ſtrictly juſt till they are brought to a fair reckoning by the ſpirit of truth; and 'tis well known, that if a creditor ſhould cancel a debt, and the debtor ſtill thought that it was unjuſtly charged, he could not heartily love him for it; therefore God brings every debtor, let him owe five hundred pence, or but fifty, to know that he is juſt, and that they have *nothing to pay*, *when* he *frankly forgives them*, *Luke* vii. 42. And thoſe who are forgiven are ſo far from deſiring to be truſted again with a ſtock in their own hands, that they durſt not truſt themſelves; they deſire ever to *truſt in the Lord* with all their hearts, and not ſo much as *lean to their own underſtandings*, *Prov.* iii. 5, 6.

And now, kind reader, where is the abſurdity and inconſiſtency of this plan? to hold that we have deſtroyed ourſelves, and that all our help is in a ſovereign God, who of his *own will* begets ſouls with the *word of truth*, and therefore calls us to *lay apart* every thing that tends to hinder our receiving it *underſtandingly* and *heartily*, and to watch againſt the devil's arts to *catch it away*, *Jam.* i. 18—21. *Matt.* xiii. 19—23. And are not thoſe Satan's inſtruments, who uſe their art either to keep people from coming to hear the word, or to arm

arm them againſt regarding it when they do come! Surely they are, therefore beware of them, as you regard your immortal ſouls. One of their moſt artful ſnares is to inſinuate, that earneſt addreſſes to mens minds betoken pride in the ſpeaker; but though pride often operates in teachers as well as hearers, yet as it is exalting ſelf, two of its never-failing fruits are deceit and bitterneſs; a deceitful handling of the word to ſuit their own ends, and bitterneſs if they are croſſed therein, *Prov.* xiii. 10. *Mic.* iii. 5. while humility, which exalts the Saviour, and abaſes ſelf, ever produces faithfulneſs and love, and moves the preacher to renounce diſhoneſty, and a deceitful handling of the word, and by manifeſtation of the truth to commend himſelf to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God, 2d *Cor.* iv. 2. But *Ahab* owned plainly that he *hated* ſuch a preacher, and would allow him no better lodgings than a *priſon*, nor better fare than *bread* and *water* of *affliction*, while he was willing delicately to maintain four hundred flatterers, though they ſoon lead him on to ruin, 1ſt *Kings*, xxii. 6—35. And alas! how much is there at this day of the ſame temper in the world, that had rather maintain four hundred flatterers than one faithful dealer!

The apoſtle *Jude*, in deſcribing thoſe who turn grace into laſciviouſneſs, ſays, Wo unto them, for they have gone in the way of *Cain*, who becauſe his doings were not accepted, was *very wroth*, and turned away to the noiſy world; after which, like *Balaam*, they run *greedily*, who counſelled *Balak* to lay a ſnare to draw *Iſrael* into ſin; and to guard againſt conviction, they, like *Core*, accuſe God's faithful

faithful ſervants with *taking too much* upon them, and with *lifting up themſelves.* And even in what they know naturally, as *brute beaſts*, they *corrupt themſelves*; for who ever knew a beaſt take pains to blind his eyes, that he might not ſee a pit till he got into it! Who ever knew a bird labour hard to cover a net, ſo that ſhe and her companions might not ſee their danger till they were taken and deſtroyed! Yet ſuch is theſe mens conduct! *Prov.* i. 17, 18. *Jude* x. 11.

To conclude, ſince precept and promiſe are united and ever go together in the goſpel plan, in vain do men attempt to ſeparate them: Every ſoul that truly believes the goſpel, has with *Jacob* got what God *has ſaid*, both to direct his conduct and to ſupport him therein; and as truth declares, that *If any man will do, he ſhall know*, *John* vii. 17. therefore all the attempts that are made by thoſe who would be accounted believers, to excuſe themſelves from openly profeſſing Chriſt, or to excuſe their neglect of a faithful diſcharge of the duties of a member of his church, either from the plea of ignorance or inability, are nothing better than attempts to juſtify ſelf, at the expence of God's honour! For as ſurely as he is true, he will never fail both to direct and ſupport every one who truſts in him, and is willing to obey him. Then let none deceive themſelves with the notion of being ſaints, if their hearts and lives are not governed and ſupported by truth; and if we are ſo, it will move us to a conſcientious uſe of all the means which God has appointed, both of a public and private nature, to learn, and to promote truth in the world, and to avoid and watch againſt all that is contrary thereto.

APPEN-

APPENDIX,

Containing a brief Account of the Sentiments of the first Baptiſt *Churches in* New-England.

IT is a juſt obſervation of an excellent writer, that ancient cuſtom and modern faſhion are two tyrants, which ſhare the empire of the world between them; the truth of which often appears, both in civil and religious affairs. The name of the *good old way*, ſeems enough to prejudice many againſt the leaſt variation from the cuſtoms of their fathers, and ſo againſt reformation; while others are ſo fond of novelties, as to be eaſily carried about with *every wind of doctrine*, that comes under a new and ſpecious name, with exclamations againſt old *traditions*. And though believers will regard the truth when they find it, for its own ſake, yet it adds to their comfort to meet with others who know the ſame, which comfort is increaſed when they can commune with thoſe who have lived long before them: Therefore having lately met with ſome things concerning the fathers of this country, which may ſerve to confirm the foregoing diſcourſe, and alſo to correct the miſtakes of many, both in our denomination, and that are oppoſite thereto, who imagine that this doctrine was in ancient days peculiar to the Pedobaptiſts, I think it proper to inſert a ſketch thereof here.

The

APPENDIX.

The oldeſt Baptiſt church in this land is at *Providence*, which was planted under the cond[uct] of Mr. *Roger Williams*; and we may well conclu[de], that thoſe who followed him into the great dang[ers] and hardſhips of his exile, had a good liking to [the] doctrines which he taught, and what they were [we] may gather from the various accounts we have [of] him.

He ca[me] firſt to this country on *February* [6] 1631, being in his youth, and he preached a wh[ile] at *Salem*, but the Court of Aſſiſtants at *Boſton* w[rote] to that church againſt him the 12th of *April* fo[l]lowing, which prevented their calling him to o[f]fice then, and he went to *Plymouth*, where he preached about three years; and Governor *Winthrop*, and Mr. *Wilſon*, of *Boſton*, upon a vi[ſit] there, communed with him at the Lord's ſuppe[r] on *October* 28, 1632*. He removed back aga[in] to *Salem*, and taught them there in the time [of] Mr. *Skelton*'s ſickneſs, and after his death, whi[ch] happened *Auguſt* 2, 1634§, Mr. *Williams* was o[r]dained over that church; but ſuch difference aroſ[e] that he was baniſhed out of the colony the ſam[e] year; and he and a few friends that followed hi[m] ſettled at *Providence*, where they ſoon after em[-]braced the Baptiſt principles. And though to ju[-]ſtify or excuſe the ſeverity that was uſed againſt him, a great deal has been written to render him odious and ridiculous, yet Dr. *Mather*, after much of that nature, ſays, "It was more than forty yea[rs] "after his exile that he lived here (at *Provi-* "*dence*) and in many things acquitted himſelf [ſo] "laud-

* Mr. *Prince*'s Annals, vol. 2. p. 26, 47, 70.
§ Magnalia, b. 3, p. 76.

"laudably, that many judicious perſons judged him "to have had the *root of the matter* in him.—He "uſed many commendable endeavours to chriſtian-"ize the *Indians* in his neighbourhood, of whoſe "language, tempers and manners, he has printed "a little relation.—There was alſo a good correſ-"pondence always held between him and many "worthy and pious people in the colony from "whence he had been baniſhed.—Againſt the "Quakers, he afterward maintained the main "principles of the *Proteſtant religion* with much "vigour*." His endeavours to chriſtianize the *Indians* appear to be the firſt that were uſed by any in this country, for we are told that the famous Mr. *Eliot* preached his firſt ſermon to them in the year 1646§; whereas Mr. *Williams* went to *England* in 1642, and obtained a charter from the ruling powers there, which is dated *March* 14, 1643‖, and with it a letter to the authority in the *Maſſachuſetts*, wherein they begin thus: "Taking "notice ſome of us of long time of *Roger Williams*, "his good affections and conſcience, and of his "ſufferings by our common enemy, and oppreſ-"ſors of God's people, the prelates, as alſo of his "great induſtry and travels in his printed *Indian* "labours in your parts (the like whereof we have "not ſeen extant from any part of *America*) and in "which reſpect it hath pleaſed both Houſes of "Parliament to grant unto him, and friends with "him, a free and abſolute charter of civil govern-"ment‡," &c. from whence we may well conclude

* Magnalia, b. 3. p. 9. § Ibid. p. 196.

‖ See a copy of the charter in the *Providence Gazette*, No. 121, *February* 9, 1765.

‡ *Maſſachuſetts* Hiſtory, vol. 1, p. 39.

clude that he was early in his endeavours, since he had got furnished so as to print a relation of their language and manners before that time. And though after gathering a Baptist church at *Providence*, Mr. *Williams*'s mind got so blundered, with the notion that many try to propagate to this day, of the necessity of a local succession from the apostles to empower persons to administer ordinances, and not being able to give in to the absurdity of deriving this power through the long scene of antichristian corruption, that he desisted from traveling with that church, yet the church has continued to this day; and Mr. *Williams* always discovered a respect for them, and sundry times expresses the same in his book concerning the Quakers, wherein he at one time mentions *Thomas Olney*, at another time, *Pardon Tillinghast*, whom he stiles, "Able and lead-"ing men among the people called Baptists in "*Providence*," p 142, and 208. And even in the midst of Dr. *Mather*'s talk of their dissolution, he says they *kept* to this one principle, "That "every one should have liberty to worship God "according to the light of his own conscience;" which implies a continuance of worship among them; and they appear to be the first civil government that ever allowed and acted upon this principle in all the protestant world; and whether they deserve reproach for it, and others honour for denying them that liberty, let the reader judge!

A late historian of high rank, speaking of Mr. *Williams*, says, "After all that has been said of "the actions or tenets of this person while he was "in the *Massachusetts*, it ought for ever to be re-

[a] Magnalia, b. 3. p. 9.

" membered to his honour, that for forty years af-
" ter, inſtead of ſhewing any revengeful reſentment
" againſt the colony, from which he had been ba-
" niſhed, he ſeems to have been conſtantly em-
" ployed in acts of kindneſs and benevolence,
" giving them notice from time to time, not on-
" ly of every motion of the *Indians*, over whom
" he had a very great influence, but alſo of the
" unjuſt deſigns of the *Engliſh* within the new co-
" lony, of which he himſelf had been the found-
" er and Governor, and continued the patron *."
And as to his teaching, Governor *Bradford*, one of the moſt eminent fathers of *Plymouth*, writes thus: " Mr. *Roger Williams* (a man godly and
" zealous, having many precious parts, but very
" unſettled in judgment) came over firſt to the
" *Maſſachuſetts*; but upon ſome diſcontent left the
" place and came hither, where he was freely en-
" tertained, according to our poor ability, and ex-
" erciſed his gifts, and after ſome time was admit-
" ted a member of the church, and his teaching
" well approved; for the benefit whereof I ſtill
" bleſs God, and am thankful to him even for his
" ſharpeſt admonitions and reproofs, ſo far as they
" agreed with truth ‖." Now it is well known, that thoſe fathers of *Plymouth*, who *well approved* of Mr. *Williams*'s teaching, held fully to the abſolute ſovereignty of grace; and Mr. *Callender*, after informing us of a diviſion which aroſe in the church at *Providence* about the year 1653, concerning laying on of hands, ſays, " That church
" which was diſtinguiſhed by holding *laying on of*
" *hands*,

* *Maſſachuſetts* Hiſtory, vol. 1. p. 38.
‖ *Prince*'s Annals, vol. 2. p. 48.

" *hands*, neceſſary to all baptized perſons, came
" in time generally to hold *univerſal redemption*;"
which he obſerves, was a departing from ſome of
Mr. *Williams*'s " Darling opinions *." This alter-
ation from their firſt principles, it ſeems, came on
gradually about twenty years after their firſt ſettle-
ment at *Providence*.

The ſecond Baptiſt church in *New-England* was
gathered at *Newport*, under the care of Mr. *John*
Clark, about the year 1644; and what their faith
was you may ſee a little of in the following ex-
tracts: " The decree of God is that whereby God
" hath from eternity ſet down with himſelf what-
" ſoever ſhall come to paſs in time, *Eph.* i. 11. All
" things with their cauſes, effects, circumſtances,
" and manner of being, are decreed by God, *Acts*
" ii. 23. Him being delivered by the *determinate*
" *counſel* and foreknowledge of God, *&c. Acts* iv.
" 28. This decree is moſt wiſe, *Rom.* xi. 33.—
" Moſt juſt, *Rom.* ix. 13, 14.—Eternal, *Eph.* i. 4,
" 5. 2d *Theſ.* ii. 13.—Neceſſary, *Pſal.* xxxiii. 11.
" *Prov.* xix. 21.—Unchangeable, *Heb.* vi. 17.—Moſt
" free, *Rom.* ix. 18.—And the cauſe of all good,
" *James* i. 17.—But not of any ſin, 1ſt *John*, i. 5.
" The ſpecial decree of God concerning angels
" and men is called *predeſtination*, *Rom.* viii. 30.
" of the former, *viz.* angels, little is ſpoken in the
" holy ſcripture; of the latter more is revealed,
" not unprofitable to be known. It may be de-
" fined, The wiſe, free, juſt, eternal, and un-
" changeable ſentence, or decree of God, *Eph.* i.
" 11. determining to create and govern man for
" his ſpecial glory, *viz.* the praiſe of his glorious

" mercy

* Mr. *Callender*'s century ſermon, p. 61.

" mercy and juſtice, *Rom.* ix. 17, 18, and xi. 36.
" Election is the decree of God, of his free love,
" grace and mercy, chooſing ſome men to faith,
" holineſs, and eternal life, for the praiſe of his
" glorious mercy, 1ſt *Theſ.* i. 4. 2d *Theſ.* ii. 13.
" *Rom.* viii. 29, 30. The cauſe which moved the
" Lord to elect them who are choſen, was none
" other but his meer good will and pleaſure, *Luke*
" xii. 32. *Rom.* xi. 5, 9, 11, 16. *Eph.* i. 5. 2d *Tim.*
" i. 9. The end is the manifeſtation of the riches
" of his grace and mercy, *Rom.* ix. 23. *Eph.* i. 6.
" The ſending of Chriſt, faith, holineſs and eter-
" nal life, are the effects of his love, by which he
" manifeſteth the infinite riches of his grace, *John*
" iii. 16. *Acts* xiii. 48. *Rom.* vi. 23. in the ſame
" order God doth execute this decree in time, he
" did decree it in his eternal counſel, 1ſt *Theſ.* v.
" 9. 2d *Theſ.* ii. 13. Sin is the effect of man's
" free will, and condemnation is an effect of ju-
" ſtice inflicted upon man for ſin and diſobedi-
" ence, *John* iii. 18. and xii. 37. A man in this
" life may be ſure of this election, 2d *Pet.* i. 10.
" 1ſt *Theſ.* i. 4. Yea of his eternal happineſs,
" *Matt.* xxiv. 24. *John* x. 28, 29. But not of his
" eternal reprobation, for he that is now profane,
" may be called hereafter, *Matt.* xx. 5, 6." Theſe extracts I carefully took from what Mr. *John Comer* recorded with his own hand, while he was paſtor of that church, which he prefaced with theſe words; *viz.* " Having found in the hands of brother *Ed-*
" *ward Smith* a ſmall book, written by Mr. *John*
" *Clark*, the firſt paſtor of this church, containing
" his judgment, and the judgment of the church,
" reſpecting that ſoul-ſupporting doctrine of *per-*

" *ſonal*

" *ſonal election*, which is at this day ſo much con-
" temned; for the eſtabliſhing the church under
" its preſent conſtitution in this glorious truth, I
" think it not improper to tranſcribe it, this 31ſt
" day of *July*, 1727."

Here note, theſe were both the ſentiments of Mr. *Clark* and of his church, of which he continued the paſtor till his death, which happened on *April* 20, 1675; only as his ſufferings in the *Maſſachuſetts* occaſioned his going to *England*, where he procured the preſent *Rhode-Iſland* charter.

Therefore ſince Mr. *Williams*, who procured their firſt charter from the Parliament, and Mr. *Clark*, who obtained their preſent charter from the King, and the two firſt churches in the colony, were ſo full in this doctrine of ſovereign grace, how illy does it become any inhabitant of that colony now to exclaim againſt the doctrine as an old notion of other ſects, but as what was new among them? And how unjuſt has it been in many others, to repreſent the contrary doctrine as peculiarly belonging to the Baptiſts *?

For as that was not the caſe in the two firſt of their churches in this country, ſo neither was it with the third, which is the firſt in the *Maſſachuſetts* province, namely that of *Swanzey*. I find by the

* Mr. *Callender* informs us, that the doctrine of *free will* and *laying on of hands* cauſed a ſeparation in the church at *Newport*, about the ſame time of that at *Providence*, Century ſermon, p. 65. And Governor *Joſeph Jenckes*, ſpeaking in a letter to a friend, dated *March* 19, 1730, of the opinion that laying on of hands ought not to be any bar of communion with thoſe who have been rightly baptized, ſays, " I have been informed by " one, or more, of the ancient members of our church at *Pro-* " *vidence*, that ſuch was the opinion of the Baptiſts in the " firſt conſtitution of their churches throughout this colony."

the records of that church, that it was constituted in the year 1649, at *Ilston*, in *Glamorganshire, South-Wales*, where it prospered under the ministry of Mr. *John Miles*, till he was ejected from thence by the act of uniformity, which turned so many godly men out of their places in 1662 †; after which, he and a considerable part of his church came over and settled at *Swanzey*, which was then in *Plymouth* colony; who were more moderate towards dissenters than some were; hence in Dr. *Mather*'s account of that colony he says, "There "has been among them one church, that questioned "and omitted the use of infant baptism; never- "theless, there being many good men among those "of that persuasion, I do not know that they "have been *persecuted*, with any harder means, "than those of kind conferences to reclaim "them ‖." And speaking of ministers that he could not tell how to put among their *worthies*, he says, "I confess, there were some of those per- "sons, whose names deserve to live in our book "for their *piety*, although their peculiar opinions "were such, as to be disserviceable unto the declar- "ed and supposed interests of our churches. Of "these there were some godly Annabaptists; as "namely, Mr. *Hansard Knollys*, of *Dover*, who "afterwards removing back to *London*, died "there, *a good man, in a good old age.* And Mr. "*Miles*, of *Swanzey*, who afterwards came to *Bo-* "*ston* §, and is now gone to his rest. Both of "these

† Dr. *Calamy*'s account of ejected ministers, vol. 2. p. 731.

‖ Magnalia, b. 1. p. 14.

§ Though he might labour a while at *Boston*, yet I am told that he died among his own people of *Swanzey*.

" theſe have a reſpectful character in the churches
" of this wilderneſs †." And Mr. *Hutchinſon* ſays,
" I have ſeen a letter from Mr. *Miles*, the Bap-
" tiſt miniſter at *Swanzey*, to one of the congre-
" gational miniſters at *Boſton*, which breaths the
" true ſpirit of the goſpel, and urges Chriſtian
" concord, charity and love, although they did
" not agree in every point ‖." Once more, as
Mr. *Clark* and his church held election to be
God's chooſing ſome men to faith, holineſs, and
eternal life, for the praiſe of his glorious mercy,
and that, " The cauſe which moved the Lord to
" elect them who are choſen, was *none other* but
" his meer good will and pleaſure," which he ex-
ecutes in the *ſame order* in time; and as Mr. *Comer*
calls this a *glorious truth*, and a *ſoul-ſupporting* doc-
trine; ſo his preaching this goſpel at *Rehoboth*, in
the year 1731, was the powerful means of con-
verting many ſouls, whom Mr. *Comer* baptized,
and ſo gathered the firſt Baptiſt church there, of
which the late Elder *Richard Round* was one, who
with others held this doctrine to the laſt. There-
fore as I think I have proved that Mr. *Martin*,
(who belongs to another ſociety in that town) has
acted againſt ſcripture and reaſon, in denying this
doctrine; ſo he alſo has againſt the teſtimony of his
pious fathers; yea I may add, of his fathers in the
other *England* as well as this; for the firſt confeſ-
ſion of faith which was publiſhed by the *Engliſh*
Baptiſts, was publiſhed by ſeven churches in *Lon-*

 don,

† Book 3. p. 7.
‖ *Maſſachuſetts* Hiſtory, vol. 1. p. 228.

dom, in 1643§, wherein they as fully expreſs their belief of abſolute ſovereignty in election, as Meſſieurs *Clark* or *Comer* do, and they ſay, "Faith is "the gift of God, wrought in the hearts of the "elect by the ſpirit of God; by which faith they "come to know and believe the truth of the ſcrip-"tures, and the excellency of them, above all "other writings, and all things in the world, as "they hold forth the glory of God in his attri-"butes, the excellency of Chriſt in his nature and "offices, and of the power and fulneſs of the ſpi-"rit in its workings and operations, and ſo are en-"abled to caſt their ſouls upon this truth thus be-"lieved.—Faith is ordinarily begotten by the "preaching of the goſpel, or word of Chriſt, "without reſpect to any power or agency in the creature; but it being wholly paſſive, and dead "in treſpaſſes and ſins, doth believe and is con-"verted by *no leſs power* than that which *raiſed* "*Chriſt from the dead* ‖." Two of the many texts which they cite to prove theſe articles, are *John* vi. 63. and *Eph.* i. 19.

I am far from deſiring any to follow the moſt eminent fathers any further than they followed Chriſt; but as I fully believe that theſe fathers did ſo, in the doctrine of ſovereign grace, in *overcoming evil with good*, and in maintaining a friendly correſpondence with pious people of other denominations, while they ſtill kept to this one principle, for each one to worſhip God according to the light

§ This was ſome years before the *Weſtminſter* confeſſion or catechiſm.

‖ *Croſby*'s Hiſtory of *Engliſh* Baptiſts, vol. 1. appendix, p. 15, 16.

light of his own conſcience; who can juſtly blame this attempt to promote theſe generous principles; which I would thankfully acknowledge are of late, in a conſiderable meaſure, revived in their children?

FINIS.